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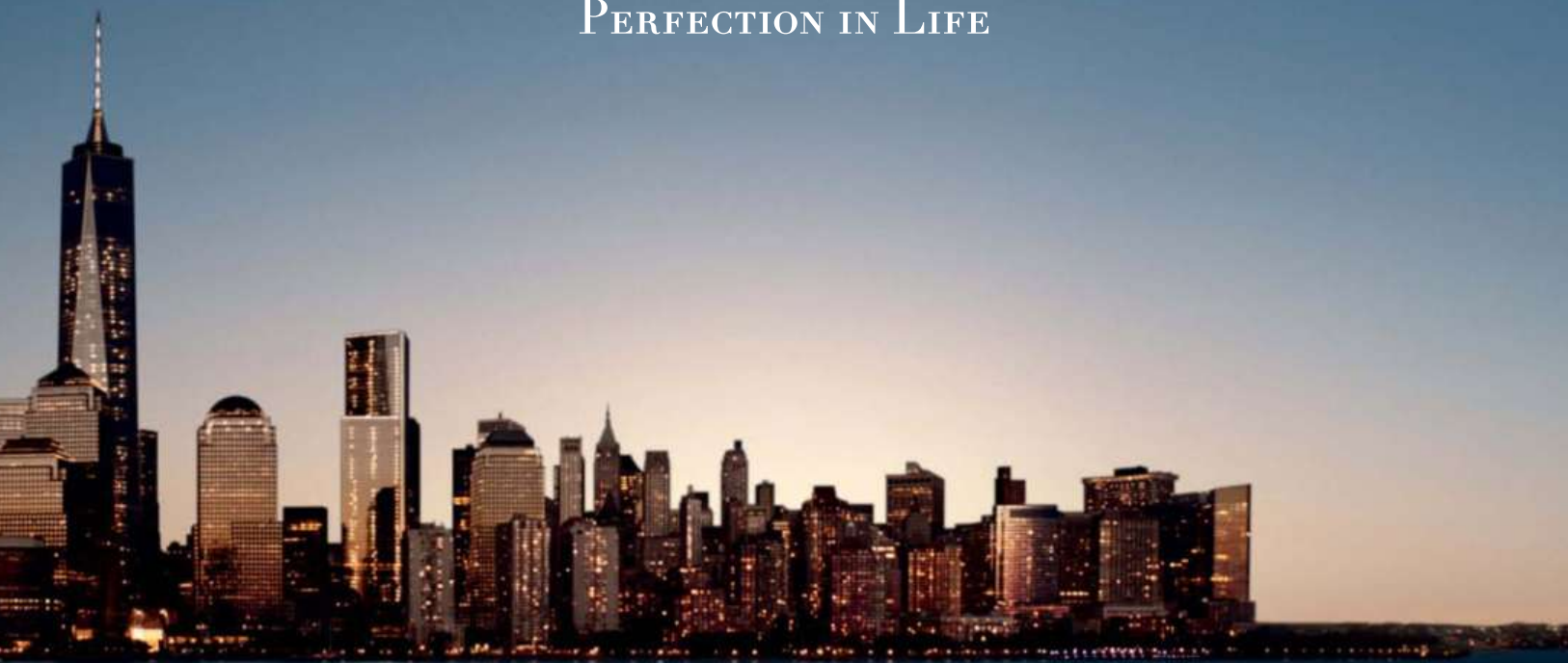


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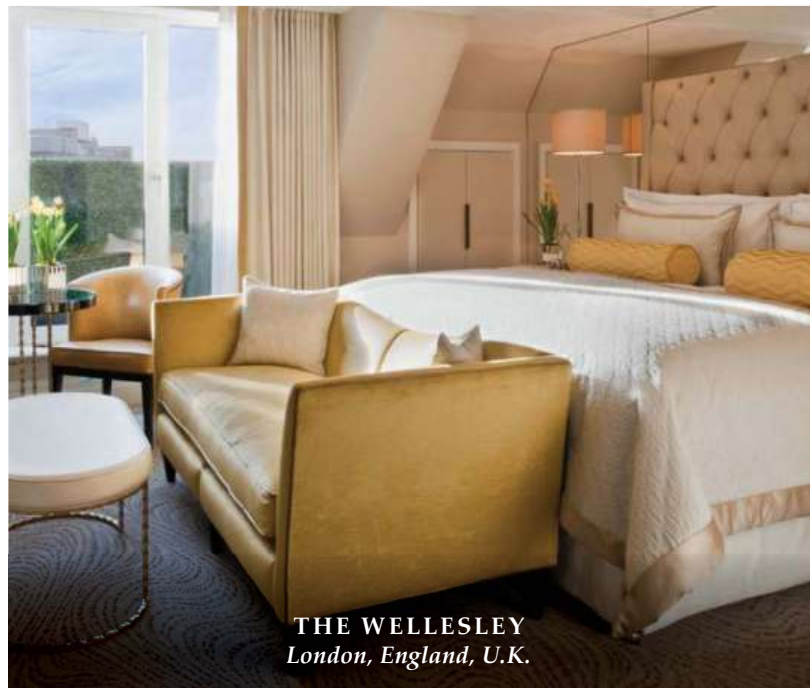
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MIDDLE EAST

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ON THE COVER



Photographed by Oliver Pilcher at London Marriott Hotel Park Lane
Model: Ellie Ross
On Ellie: Jacket, dress, bag, boots; all by Chanel

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Aishwarya Rai
Aishwarya Rai



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EDITOR'S LETTER

EDITOR'S PHOTO: SABINA PARKINSON; ADDITIONAL PHOTOS: RHEA SARAN



TRUTH IN TRAVEL

This is our promise to the reader to be an essential source of honest opinion and must-have information. You can trust *Condé Nast Traveller* to give you the unbiased inside track, with integrity and authority.

For a little while, I felt like I was leading a double life. I'd landed in London all set to check out the cool, new, contemporary spots popping up around Mayfair, places I'd spent the better part of the last couple months researching and talking to people about. And visit them I did – the chill basement speakeasy, the casual Parisian bistro above it; the gallery championing avant-garde art; the bespoke crafts atelier just off Oxford Street – but in my spare time I also went old school. Like the night a lovely Mayfair-residing friend took me to 5 Hertford Street, the discreet members' club where Clooney, Cruise and Kate have stopped in. The heyday of these sorts of establishments, some say, have passed but I was still charmed by the exquisite little courtyard where a uniformed member of staff served us chilled libations as we chatted into the evening, amid several specimens of the city's well-heeled and well-togged. Being early August, it was a quieter night – downstairs club Loulou wasn't open – yet I imagined I could quite easily while away many a night here. On a different evening, both the upstairs bar and the downstairs nightclub at The Arts Club were hopping when I went with another – perhaps more stubby yet no less lovely – friend with membership privileges. It was the sort of place where you could dance into the wee hours. And so we did.

Truth is, I simply can't pick. I enjoy simplicity and I love a bit of posh. I veer toward the classic while embracing the modern. That goes for everything – food, fashion, art, vacation destinations. I'll do the so-casual-it's-not-so-



From left: Wandering down South Audley Street in Mayfair; Teddy the resident chow chow and namesake of Chez Chow, a cosy new speakeasy

casual thing hipsters do then don DVF and sip bubbles at a place where... wait, is that David Beckham over there?

Which is why it was so exciting to rediscover Mayfair after several years. While reinvention might be a strong term, there's certainly a diversity of experience that wasn't as apparent before (more on that in *Mayfair Modern*, p 92). As the co-founder of crafts atelier The New Craftsmen put it, there are now more places in Mayfair that have similar base values as traditional brands but who are doing something different. A rethinking, if you will, of what defines luxury.

And that's the crux of it, really. Luxury means different things to different people – or different things to the same people in various circumstances. Take travel. If you have a family, for instance, the greatest luxury could be holidaying in a place that will keep the kids occupied and in constant awe (like Rome, p 36). If rich history, pristine beaches and world-class golf courses are what float your boat, then a trip through Vietnam might hit the spot (for those with the luxury of time, we cut the work in half with a 10-day itinerary, p 112). Or, like writer Stephen Bayley, you might want to challenge traditional notions of luxury head on as he does by asking whether Burgundy's Michelin-starred reputation is deserved (his findings on p 104).

Whether you're planning a getaway now or for later, there's plenty here to daydream about. And that's a luxury in itself.

RHEA SARAN Editor in Chief

@rheasaran @really_thea



From top: Old meets new in more ways than one in re-energised Mayfair; at Michelin-starred restaurant Gymkhana, old-world dishes are given a modern twist, like in the duck dosa

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BATLIWALLA

Batliwalla is a freelance stylist and fashion writer who contributes to international titles including *Glamour*, *Bon* and *Grazia India*. Based in London, she also writes the fashion-industry insider blog disneyrollergirl.net

BASED IN: London

STYLED: Cover & *Mayfair Modern*, p 92

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE COVER SHOOT WAS...

"As a born and bred Londoner, it was a treat to spend time really taking in the sights of Mayfair, all in the name of work. I'm a big fan of artisanal British homeware, so The New Craftsmen store was my favourite location – perfectly accessorised with new-season Fendi."

WHAT'S THE MOST STYLISH CITY YOU'VE VISITED?

"I love vibrant cities that have a buzzy, 24-hour atmosphere so Mumbai gets my vote. You get the sense of being in a movie as you watch the world pass by from a cab window. You can absorb so much just by people-watching and I find myself taking in the colours, shapes, textures and sounds in an amazing synaesthetic blur. There's always something new to discover and it's never what you'd expect."

OLIVER
PILCHER



After studying sculpture at Edinburgh College of Art, Pilcher spent some time in New York assisting photographer Anders Overgaard. He then moved to London in 2006 to pursue his own career in photography, with plans to return to the Big Apple next year.

BASED IN: Moray, Scotland

PHOTOGRAPHED: Cover & *Mayfair Modern*, p 92

SHOOTING IN MAYFAIR WAS FUN BECAUSE...

"It's an incredibly photogenic area and it's easy to make it look good, so I loved shooting there. Mayfair is not a part of London I visit regularly so I enjoyed taking in the glamour of places like Mount Street, and the London Marriott Hotel Park Lane was first class."

WHAT'S THE MOST STYLISH CITY YOU'VE VISITED?

"I think it would have to be Rio de Janeiro. The location is incredible – I've never seen a city like it – the people are absolutely beautiful, their bodies are amazing (I've never felt so pale and British) and their attitude to life is dazzling. Life revolves around the beach, sport and eating well, which generally ticks all my boxes."



ALICE
OLIVER

Oliver has worked as a hair and make-up artist for over a decade and her work has appeared in magazines such as *Wonderland*, *Nylon* and *Elle* as well as in campaigns for Whistles, Ted Baker and Topman. She has also worked with musicians like Natalia Kills.

BASED IN: London

HAIR & MAKE-UP FOR: Cover & *Mayfair Modern*, p 92

DURING THE SHOOT I MOST ENJOYED...

"Revisiting Mayfair, where I started my career (at Michaeljohn salon and agency), seeing how it has changed and going to places I've never been before like Hus Gallery. A moment that stands out was when we came across a lady and her kids walking their dog, the latter of whom we thought would work perfectly with the look in one of the shots – it was such a great addition."

WHAT'S THE MOST STYLISH CITY YOU'VE VISITED?

"Florence. The setting is so beautiful and unique: a mix of historical architecture set against the backdrop of rolling hills with the river running through it. The city has a real charm, and the art, culture and food add to the style of the city. Italians always look chic and sophisticated, whatever their age."



OLIVER
ROBINSON

Having spent the best part of a decade working as a magazine editor in various cities across Asia and the Middle East, Oliver returned to Yorkshire where he now juggles travel writing and farming.

BASED IN: Yorkshire

WROTE: *Tucking into Texas*, p 50

THE MOST MEMORABLE PART OF AUSTIN'S FOOD SCENE WAS...

"Taking in the sights, sounds and smells of South Congress – a street that sums up all that is good about the Texan capital. Then there was The White Horse: the best honky-tonk in town for a night of wild music and wilder dancing."

WHAT'S THE MOST STYLISH CITY YOU'VE VISITED?

"Austin's definitely up there but I think Stockholm wins in the style stakes. I love how the architecture and city planning complement the city's verdant natural beauty. In the summer, all the bars and restaurants open up, so diners and partygoers can spill out on to the street, resulting in a convivial, celebratory atmosphere. Also, everyone in Stockholm is unfeasibly fashionable – well-dressed and good looking. I'm not quite sure how they do it."



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There's more to come soon.

OCTOBER
18 - 22



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Agenda

THE TRAVEL CONNOISSEUR ■ CALENDAR ■ ALICE TEMPERLEY ■ ROME WITH KIDS



The grounds of the
Puesto Viejo Estancia
& Polo Club at sunrise

A photograph of several palm trees silhouetted against a warm, orange-hued sky at sunset or sunrise. The trees are of varying heights, with the tallest one in the center. The foreground is dark and appears to be a grassy field.

PICK UP STICKS

The rarefied world of polo, bound by centuries of well-defined traditions and idealised by a rather famous fashion label, can feel as insular as it does elegant. But when *YOLANDA EDWARDS* takes to the field near Buenos Aires, she learns that even newcomers to the sport can get into the swing of things

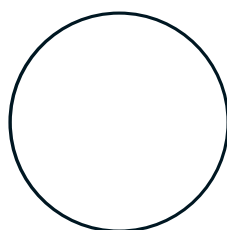
Photographed by **ANDERS OVERGAARD**



Puesto Viejo player
Yeye Guiraldes



The Puesto Viejo
clubhouse



IN THE VAST PAMPAS that spread like gold-green oceans across the northeast quadrant of Buenos Aires Province, polo permeates the culture. When you

get here, you immediately understand why: Besides the uniform topography and the relative wealth of the region, there are long-standing twin traditions of horse-keeping and horsemanship. In the land of the gaucho, boys and girls are often plopped into the saddle around the time they learn to walk, which is why many of the sport's best players come from this country where the sun shines beneficently for nine or 10 months a year.

There are dozens of *estancias*, or estates, scattered across the region of Cañuelas; a handful are owned by notable polo circuit pros, such as Ignacio "Nacho" Figueras (the absurdly handsome face of many a Ralph Lauren ad campaign, a St. Regis brand ambassador and star player on the Lauren-sponsored, Florida-based Black Watch Team) and Adolfo Cambiaso (currently the No 1 player in the world); think the Cristiano Ronaldo and David Beckham of the sport of kings. Polo-obsessed Porteños, as citizens of Buenos Aires are known, leave the city on weekends in a mass exodus to spend the day

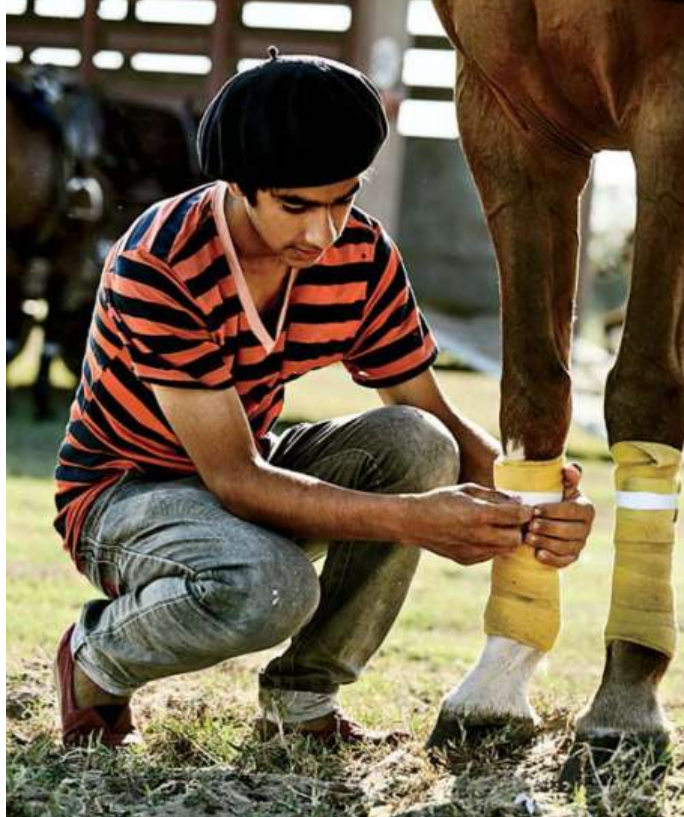
galloping across the pitch – or, alternatively, to laze along its perimeter, engaged in the spectating and socialising that are the invariable adjuncts to the game itself.

It's here that Englishman Jeremy Baker, a former Goldman Sachs trader, purchased a 540-acre *estancia* called Puesto Viejo in 2003. For years, Baker and his Argentine wife, Lilliana, who took up polo in 1998 in England, indulged in fantasies of moving to Argentina, and in 2010 they finally did. "We have that incredible feeling of openness and space of Argentina," says Baker of Puesto Viejo, which seduced him immediately. "All that horizon, 360-degree views, an amazing number of eucalyptus trees on the estate – but at the same time it's just 25 minutes from the international airport and an hour from the centre of Buenos Aires.

Over the years, Baker laid out six standard polo fields around Puesto Viejo's original 100-year-old outbuildings and built stables for housing 250 ponies (some of which cost as much as a luxury German sedan, hence the robust 24-hour security at the *estancia*'s gates). Since 2007, Puesto Viejo has been a fully functioning polo club, among the few in the country where polo is played most of the year. It was designated an active working club by the Argentine Polo Association, which is based at the Asociación Civil Hurlingham Club (known colloquially here as the Hurlingham

Club, after the venerated English institution it was founded as a sister to in the late 1800s). The original *casita* has become the members' clubhouse; the original "Puesto Viejo", the gauchos' quarters, has been reimagined by Lilliana as a 10-room boutique hotel for visiting members and aficionados of the game. Well-loved throw rugs line the burnished plank floors; armoires and chests of drawers snatched up at local markets are pushed up against the thick white adobe walls. Outside, you can opt to appreciate those 360-degree views Baker talks about from the vantage point of a hammock strung between eucalyptus trees, or take in some stick-and-ball practice from the *estancia*'s turquoise infinity pool.

First and foremost, though, Puesto Viejo is about the game. The rooms (though lovely in their authenticity) and the food (though delicious and served communally at a large refectory table) have, by the Bakers' design, always been secondary to the club – which is why the place attracts diehard players and fans. Among them is Arthur Fitzwilliam, a Brit who fell in love with the sport at age 40 and spent the next two decades deep in its culture, living and playing, first in Dubai for several years and then, more recently, here in Cañuelas. These days he is at Puesto Viejo eight or nine months a year; he boards around 20 ponies with the Bakers and can often be found tableside at dinner time.



‘There’s that incredible feeling of openness of Argentina: all that horizon, 360-degree views, eucalyptus trees – but it’s just an hour from the centre of Buenos Aires’



The infinity pool at the Puesto Viejo Estancia, the on-site hotel, overlooks a practice field. **Left:** A groomer (called a *petisero*) wraps a horse's legs to protect them from the mallets and balls

“The polo that’s offered [to visitors] in this region is often essentially theatre,” says Fitzwilliam. “It’s ‘Come and have a good time, aren’t you great, look at you,’ whether you’re a rubbish player or not. That’s a standard offering [in this area]: a good time, great food, beautiful people and location. But if you’re serious about your game, it might do little for you.”

What Puesto Viejo does is very different. Unlike in Europe and America, where the game is usually highly seasonal, here at Puesto Viejo, polo is played more or less continuously from September through May – a fact attributable as much to the members’ zeal (Fitzwilliam describes his fellow club members as “a load of addicts”) as to Argentina’s nearly year-round mild climate.

Though polo hasn’t caught on this strongly everywhere, it’s a sport that has undoubtedly been mythologised by countless Ralph Lauren ad campaigns and photos of Prince Harry in a saddle and riding boots. What’s unique about Puesto Viejo *habitués*, whether one of the 40-odd local Argentine members or the foreigners who drop in seasonally, is that they welcome curious novices who have always wanted to pick up a mallet. The game’s seemingly inherent barriers to entry – wealth, skill, experience – are softened here, offering beginners a chance to experience the game and its culture. In keeping with the

democratic spirit of the place, Baker even offers polo “days” – eight-hour intensive programmes, run by expert instructors, which regularly see first-timers to both polo and horses hitting balls from the saddle by afternoon’s end, galloping back and forth on the 300-yard-long polo field.

But if you do spend a few days here, know that you’re bound to be immersed in the real deal, whether you’re in the saddle, watching one of the practice matches that are played four days a week without fail, or drinking grape on the terrace, taking in the endless horizon, the neat paddocks, the very landscape of the game – of which you’re now, if only briefly, a part.

BEFORE YOU GO

Get in touch with **Maita Barrenechea**, who’s been in the business for more than three decades and might well be Argentina’s greatest ambassador and tastemaker. She will quickly intuit your needs and curate a programme that ranges from condor-watching in Patagonia to the practical challenge of booking a table on a Sunday night in Catholic BA. mai10.com.ar

GETTING THERE

Emirates (emirates.com) flies from Dubai to Buenos Aires via Rio de Janeiro. Qatar Airways

(qatarairways.com) flies from Doha via São Paulo to Buenos Aires.

AND ONCE YOU LAND

Call **Mario Posadas**. There’s no Uber, and the right local driver can help you maximise every moment, providing in essence a Cliff’s Notes guide to the city. Don’t expect a sleek Mercedes (luxury cars are rare in Argentina), but his Toyota Corolla is clean, air-conditioned and stocked with bottles of cold water.

From AED 110 per hour; 0054-911-5511 3591

CAÑUELAS 411

The **Puesto Viejo Estancia & Polo Club** is located 45 minutes from Ministro Pistarini Airport, also known as Ezeiza International Airport. You can go for the day en route to or from Buenos Aires or stay the weekend. Packages include Polo Day & Stay for AED 920 a night, and Full Board & Polo, with one-to-one polo lessons, for AED 1,380 a night (*doubles from AED 890*; 0054-115-279 6893, puetoviejoeostancia.com.ar). **La Parrilla**, pronounced *par-ee-ja* (in Argentina, the double / sounds like a *j*), is the polo players’ local restaurant. Have the steak, blood sausage and intestines for the full macho experience (0054-787-294 0606). And for gorgeous local cheeses and salami, as well as handmade espadrilles, stop at **La Querencia**, across the street (0054-114-821 1888). **CNT**

The Travel Connoisseur

On why travelling in style should extend to your wardrobe

When The Travel Connoisseur awoke, it was still the middle of the night – but he wanted enough time to get ready for an early flight to Switzerland. The 22kg “carry-on” wooden trunk, which he’d been artfully smuggling past the controllers at airports for years, was filled with outfits from the latest collection of his favourite French fashion brand. One suit had to go, though. The stiff wood panels of the trunk offered quite limited stretching capacity.

Every time TTC travelled he did his best to look sharp, regardless of time of day, duration of the flight or destination, be it the Paris of the West, the Paris of the East, or even the Paris of the Caspian (also known as Baku, capital of Azerbaijan). Truth be told, he missed the days when people made an effort for flights, when jeans were banned in the First Class cabins of some airlines.

“The world has changed,” as the founder of a famous forum says each year at the opening plenary of the gathering amid snow-capped peaks. Now pyjamas, shapeless T-shirts, “comfy” shorts and all manner of flip-flops have replaced tailored jackets, dresses and crisp shirts in airport lounges as well as on board. These days TTC, in his usual slim suited silhouette and polished red-soled kicks, feels more like part of the in-flight visual entertainment than a normal passenger.

Flying has somehow, tragically, evolved into an anti-social affair, for which people have stopped making any effort to look good. Yet travelling by air means being seen in public, no different to going to the theatre or dining at a restaurant – so why would one not dress for it? After all, sitting through a four-hour *War And Peace* opera in the 239-year-old box seats of the Bolshoi is much less comfortable than a short sojourn in a sleek airline suite – yet nobody wears anything remotely resembling black tie. Some even forget to wear cologne.

Apart from simply looking presentable, dressing up for a flight has other, unwritten benefits such as better service throughout as well as various priorities and exceptions made for you. Sometimes that means receiving special souvenirs as you leave the cabin, the likes of which are never offered to anyone else. Plus, your confidential passenger profile is given an extra star by the head purser for future travel.

Occasions where the privileges conferred by impeccable tailoring can’t help you are rare and generally involve impossible situations. There was a turbulent departure recently, for instance, when TTC read his Spanish boarding pass incorrectly, therefore arriving at the airport – fashionably – an hour late. And so commenced a memorable spectacle: At 15 minutes to take-off (the scary T minus 15, to frequent flyers), TTC beamed his

Flying has evolved into an anti-social affair, for which people have stopped making an effort to look good. Yet travelling by air means being seen in public, no different to dining in a restaurant

way through all the earthly airport hassles, hurdling over screaming kids and groups of Chinese tourists wearing *démodé* face masks, making it from the limousine to the gate in just under eight minutes – all while fully outfitted in next season’s threads, flashing just a hint of red sole and keeping the coiffured ‘do intact. With just minutes to lift-off, the plane was already pushing back by the time he screeched to a halt at the gate and attempted to prove his poor knowledge of Spanish.

No matter. Three hours and a few bubbles in a red crystal flute later, TTC was re-routed via Paris and boarded a Spanish carrier he’d never flown before, travelling at the very back of the plane with no more covetable seats available. Inside the tiny Embraer jet, the oversized monogrammed wooden trunk had no suitable resting place. Normally, it took up residence in the suite across the aisle, but here it refused to fit even into the totally empty overhead bin. Which was when the power of the suit kicked in once again, as a stewardess took possession of the case, strapping it into two empty seats, saying with a smile, “Just because you look so handsome. This is not normally allowed.”

The trunk saved from being checked in, TTC relaxed. As she stepped away, the smiler called over her shoulder, “By the way, I also like your perfume.” **CNT**



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DODGE

SEPTEMBER

What in the world is happening this month

Enjoy amusement rides at Munich's Oktoberfest



5-November 1

WHERE Istanbul, Turkey

WHAT With "Saltwater" as the theme, the 14th edition of the **Istanbul Biennial** (bienal.liksv.org/en) takes place in venues along the Bosphorus, including museums, hotels and garages, as well as aboard boats, showcasing the works of over 60 artists, oceanographers and neuroscientists from around the globe.

HOW Turkish Airlines (turkishairlines.com) flies direct from the GCC to Istanbul.

6

WHERE Venice, Italy

WHAT History buffs and sports fans gather at the Grand Canal to watch the annual **Regata Storica** (regatastoricavenezialt.it), a series of four rowing races, preceded by a pageant featuring 16th-century-style boats manned by gondoliers in period costumes.

HOW Viator's Skip the Line: Venice in One Day tour serves up architectural highlights like Piazza San Marco and Palazzo Ducale in one neat package. **AED 260 including walking tour and boat ride; viator.com**

10-20

WHERE Toronto, Canada

WHAT The **Toronto International Film Festival** screens a wide range of films, from foreign titles to Hollywood productions. This year sees the launch of Primetime, a showcase of the best in TV programming, followed by Q&A sessions with the shows' creators. **HOW** Become a TIFF member to reap benefits such as discounts on TIFF screenings, 15 per cent off at TIFF Shop and concession stands and access to the Bell Blue Room Members' Lounge. **AED 364 for individual memberships; tiff.net**

18-20

WHERE California, USA

WHAT Taking place in the 20-acre, oak-studded Monterey County Fair Grounds, the **Monterey Jazz Festival** is one of the longest continuously running jazz fests in the world, featuring conversations, panel discussions, workshops and exhibitions. The 2015 line-up includes over 500 artists, including Grammy-winner Chick Corea. **HOW** A Premier Club Pass offers meet-and-

greet with artists, seats in the arena and complimentary food and soft drinks. **AED 1,100 for an all-weekend pass; montereyjazzfestival.org/tickets**

19-October 4

WHERE Munich, Germany

WHAT Strap on your lederhosen for the world's largest annual Volksfest, **Oktoberfest** (muenchen.de), an important part of Bavarian culture. The 16-day folk festival features activities like amusement rides and carnival games alongside food stalls dishing up traditional German cuisine – best enjoyed with a glass of local hops in hand.

HOW After a long day of celebrating, retreat to The Charles Hotel, which is located near historical sites like the Old Botanical Garden and Königsplatz. **Doubles from AED 2,665; 0049-89-544 5550, roccofortehotels.com**

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Q&A

AROUND THE WORLD WITH... Alice Temperley

The British fashion designer on airport style, shopping gems and hotel design

With stand-alone stores in London, Doha and, most recently, Dubai as well as a host of international stockists, Temperley is constantly traversing the globe looking for inspiration for her next collection. We caught up with the bohemian designer on her recent trip to the UAE.

What was it like designing the tipi for the One & Only Le Saint Géran, Mauritius?

It was great. I had beautiful embroidered panels made and we appliqued them on to the tipi. Temperley is a luxury lifestyle brand, so launching furnishings and interiors really appeals to me. We have so many beautiful patterns and prints that would work for homeware. You also don't have to redo it every season – you can create a beautiful look then add to it. It's a much more realistic way of working.

Which destinations have inspired your designs?

Anywhere that has a rich heritage and beautiful textiles with unique prints. I travel a lot to Africa, the Mediterranean and Mexico, and often find inspiration for my vibrant, colourful, free-flowing designs. In the Middle East I take inspiration from the geometric patterns, which you can see in some of my laser printing.

What's the best purchase you've made on your travels?

My best purchases are normally done in Bergdorf Goodman's shoe department in New York. And I love the jewellery in Paris: there's a lovely shop opposite the Hotel Côtés called Dary's where I always pick up a treat after fashion week.

What's your fail-safe airport outfit?

I wear something comfortable like soft tailored trousers and a light shirt, then pack a big Temperley blanket shawl to put over me on the plane and massive, noise-cancelling headphones.

Which destination impressed you most?

I love Africa for its remoteness. I have quite a



'I love Africa for its remoteness. A friend has an elephant camp in the Samburu National Reserve in Kenya and I take my son there at least once a year'

few friends who grew up there and are doing amazing things. A friend has an elephant camp in the Samburu National Reserve in Kenya and I take my son there at least once a year. Mexico is another place I enjoy for the beautiful music, nature and food – I recently went to Sayulita, down south, for a wedding. And then near Careyes, to another friend's place, which is a gorgeous spot for New Year.

What do you never travel without?

Red lipstick, my sketchbook, lots of pens and pencils, and my laptop. I'm always writing – I'm a list person – and I don't like writing on gadgets. It helps if I can't sleep.



From top: Samburu National Park, Kenya; New York's Gramercy Park Hotel

What item would you stalk housekeeping for?

The Gramercy Park Hotel in New York has amazing, heady, woody candles – they smell like a French chateau. I absolutely love the body creams and perfumes at Hôtel Costes in Paris. I wear Costes 2 perfume.

I'm embarrassed I haven't been to...

Venice. I can't believe it. I'm hoping my man will take me soon, it looks so romantic. I want to go explore the canals and lagoons. I also really want to go to Budapest. My friend is making a movie out there and I've heard it's a beautiful old city.

What's your dream trip?

I'd like to spend six months in South America, first horse riding in Argentina, then exploring Chile, Brazil and Colombia.

Do you have a tried and tested jet lag cure?

Sleep. And I use essential oils like thieves oil and vitality oil. I dab them on my pulse points and on my face and really inhale them. They awaken your senses and boost your immunity. **CNT**

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ROMAN HOLIDAY

The Eternal City is a colossal adventure playground for kids, with armoured gladiators and bone-strewn catacombs to fire their imagination, and pizzas and ice cream for fuel, says *EMILY MULLAN*

Children playing at
the Trevi Fountain



The pool at Villa Nocetta. **Right:** Cycling alongside the river Tiber



ROME WITH KIDS

BEST ATTITUDE

Even if everything about the city seems to be chaotic, try to keep your cool. The Romans still dream of ruling the world, and every taxi driver thinks he is Julius Caesar. Nothing you can do will make them change their minds. The key to enjoying Rome is to relax and not to end up with terminal cultural indigestion. Don't underestimate your children. If exploration of the weightier sites is kept quick and snappy, they can manage and absorb much more than you realise. Be selective: whether your preference is for emperors or popes, you could spend a lifetime getting to grips with Rome's history – don't try to do it all.

MINI CULTURE VULTURES

A good place to start is by taking the glass lift to the top of the **Vittoriano Monument**, otherwise known as the Wedding Cake. The view is unrivalled and the impeccably dressed military guard will blow whistles at unruly children. Also remember that kids are often fascinated with anything to do with death. A trip to the **Catacombs**, which are always blissfully cool in the heat of a Roman summer, or to the crypt of Santa Maria della Concezione dei Cappuccini, with its bizarre decorations made from the bones of 4,000 monks, will capture the attention of even the most uninterested child.

ART ATTACK

The one piece of art to wake children up is the magnificent trompe-l'oeil dome inside **Sant'Ignazio di Loyola**, painted by the great fresco artist Andrea Pozzo when the church didn't have the funds to pay for an actual

Rome has some of the best pizza in Italy



dome. If the children stand on the marble disc in the centre of the nave, it's almost impossible for them to tell that the ceiling is actually flat.

BEST GUIDE

John Fort (johnfort.com) has guided in Rome for decades and is excellent at bringing the ancient city to life. Expertise in Greek and Roman myths and legends combined with a passion for ice cream (his favourite flavour is wild Sardinian honey, from Il Gelato di San Crispino) makes him the ideal guide for small people.

A trip to the Catacombs or the crypt of Santa Maria della Concezione dei Cappuccini, with its decorations made from bones, will capture the attention of even the most uninterested child

BEST SWEET TREAT

A cobbles's throw from Sant'Ignazio is the legendary **Giolitti** (0039-06-699 1243, giolitti.it/en) ice cream parlour. Waiters in white jackets with stiff gold brocade deal swiftly with the hungry hordes who flock to the finest purveyor of *gelati* in the Eternal City, if not the whole of Italy. The flavours on offer change with the seasons, but to be the envy of all indulge in a *coppa giolitti*, a sundae comprising chocolate ice cream, custard, *zabaione* and cream, topped with shavings of hazelnut.

AN IDEAL AFTERNOON

The Villa Borghese gardens sprawl across 148 acres and encompass merry-go-rounds, trees that are just asking to be climbed, a small zoo and a boating lake. It even boasts the enchanting **Cinema dei Piccoli** (0039-06-855) ▶

3485, *cinemadepiccoli.it*), Rome's only cinema exclusively for children, which also has an excellent café next door. At the weekend, the paved roads throng with cyclists, roller-skaters and electric golf buggies, which can be hired at the entrance at Viale Trinità dei Monti. Unlike most cars, golf buggies have unlimited access to the entire historical centre, saving tired little legs from exhaustion as they whizz past layers of Roman history, from ancient basilicas to the baroque fountains in Piazza Navona and the contemporary glass box shrouding the ornate **Ara Pacis** (*arapacis.it*) altar.

BEST ESCAPE

To really get to grips with how the Ancient World lived on a daily basis, head for the archaeological site of **Ostia Antica** (*ostia-antica.org*), which served as Rome's seaport and is a quick train ride away. Picnic in the shade of an umbrella pine and let the children run free among the ruins.

BEST INSIDER SECRET

Recently opened by a member of the renowned Antinori grape dynasty, **Fattoria di Fiorano** (0039-06-7934 0114, *fattoriadifiorano.it*) is a beautiful working farm and vineyard just a short drive from the city centre along the ancient Appian Way. As well as having a superb restaurant and children's menu (*entrées from AED 70, open Friday to Sunday only*), the farm offers regular cooking classes and experiences for children. Pizza-making, for example, involves collecting ingredients from around the farm, including wheat, tomatoes, basil and eggs, before getting hands mucky rolling out the dough. For parents, a tasting of the organic grape in the cellar can be arranged.

DRESSING-UP GAMES

Closer to Rome, at the start of the Appian Way, is the immensely popular **Gladiator School**, where wannabe Russell Crowes aged seven and over can learn the art of gladiatorial combat. Each session lasts just over two hours, and includes a tour of the Museum of the Roman Army. Participants wear special tunics and are awarded certificates to pin on their bedroom walls. Alternatively, head for the **Cinecittà World** (*cinecittaworld.it/en*) theme park, which opened last summer. Roller-coasters and bumper cars aside, the biggest thrill is in donning togas to re-enact famous scenes from the epic films *Ben-Hur* and *Cleopatra* on the original sets.

MONSTER MUNCHERS' BRUNCH

If you're not lucky enough to be staying at **JK Place Roma** (*doubles from AED 2,390; 0039-06-98 2634, *jkroma.com**), the boutique hotel offers a weekend brunch. The menu is superb: bread comes from Rome's finest traditional baker, Roscioli; cheeses from



Lazio; and pasta, including a sublime *cacio e pepe*, is made to order. What's more, children under 10 years old go for free.

PIZZA

Children love street food, and Rome has some of the best in Italy. You'll find *pizza al taglio* – by the slice – more or less everywhere, but connoisseurs head for the staggeringly tasty offerings at **Pizzarium** (0039-063-974 5416), near the Vatican. And at **Antico Forno Roscioli** (0039-06-686 4045, *anticoformoroscioli.it/en*), which you'll find by the Campo de' Fiori vegetable market, the *pizza rossa* is possibly even better than its awesome bread.

LUNCH

'Gusto Osteria (0039 06 3211 1482, *gusto.it*) has exposed brickwork and marble counters that groan under antipasti during *aperitivo* hour. It's near Piazza Augusto Imperatore, where Mini Coopers raced through the columns in *The Italian Job*, making it a must for young and old. For a taste of old-fashioned Rome, join the legions of local families who have been flocking for centuries to **La Campana**

(0039-06-687 5273, *ristorantelacampana.com*). Purporting to be Rome's oldest restaurant, dating back to the 16th century, the emphasis here is on traditional Roman dishes such as *carciofi alla giudia* (fried artichokes) and *coda alla vaccinara* (oxtail stew), which both feature on the daily menu.

SUPPER

Enoteca Corsi (*entrées from AED 100; 0039-06-679 0821, *enotecacorsi.com**), tucked down a small alley behind the Pantheon, feels like a real discovery. The grape shop next door closes at 1pm to allow for trestle tables to be set up between the bottles and crates. The lively atmosphere makes it great fun, and the food is simple but good, with a choice of three dishes for each course. Open for dinner on Thursdays and Fridays only.

PIT STOP

The Museo Canova Tadolini (*coffee from AED 15; 0039-063-211 0702, *canovatatolini.com**) is packed with plaster casts of sculptures by Antonio Canova and Adamo Tadolini, giving it the feel of a sculptor's studio as it would



The modern interiors at Hotel de Russie. **Right:** The Villa Borghese gardens



have been in the time of the Grand Tourists. Sculptures are also scattered around the coffee shop and restaurant upstairs, making it the perfect spot to combine a dash of culture with a shot of espresso.

WONDROUS SHOPS

The motorheads in the family will enjoy the **Ferrari Store** (store.ferrari.com) on Via Tomacelli, where they can have their photo taken next to Formula 1 cars. A few minutes' walk away, there is the choice of **LittleBigTown**, Italy's largest toy store, or the tiny **Pesciolino Rosso**, near the Spanish Steps, which sells enchanting hand-carved models of Pinocchio.

COOL DOWN

It is beyond helpful to know that the **Rome Cavalieri Hotel** (doubles from AED 1,530; 0039-063 5091, romecavalieri.com), which has three pools, allows non-residents to escape the baking city. Come any time, or plan ahead for the weekend brunch, when kids can also enjoy face-painting, bouncy castles, an ice cream bar and pizza-making classes. There are also on-site nannies, so parents can kick back, too.

WHERE TO STAY

Hotel de Russie (doubles from AED 3,125; 0039-06-32 8881, roccofortehotels.com) is still the

number-one address in Rome. The pared-down design is fresh and sophisticated, the light-filled suites are gigantic and the location by Piazza del Popolo is exactly where you want to be. Best of all are the spectacular gardens – a magical escape for children needing to let off steam. The hotel's recently launched Teen programme inspires even the most sullen adolescents to discover the city through sport, fashion and movies. The fact that they are shown around by the prettiest guides in town also helps. **Casa Howard** (doubles from AED 715; 0039-066-992 4555, casahoward.com) is the city's secret pied-à-terre, hidden down a side street near the Spanish Steps. There are five differently styled bedrooms: the Chinese Room, for example, is swathed in glamorous silks, while the White Room is a fresh mix of Toile de Jouy and delicate antique furnishings. OK, so you have to walk down a corridor to get to the bathroom, but kimonos and slippers are provided. **Villa Nocetta** (villa from AED 45,000 for two nights; 0039-06-663 7119, villanocetta.com), with its large swimming pool and jasmine-scented garden, is great. This is a real retreat and sleeps 12 comfortably. Nicholas the driver will drop you wherever you want to go. There's also a cook and a lovely butler, Tiziana, who can arrange for a gladiator to come to the villa for one-on-one lessons. **CNT**



Il Pesciolino Rosso toy shop



Relax on the
hotel's pristine
white sand beach

Arabian SPLENDOUR

Escape to the Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi
Hotel and Villas, an exclusive island
getaway that's close to home

Located on a 9km stretch of environmentally protected beach on Saadiyat Island, Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi Hotel and Villas features 306 luxury guestrooms, suites and villas designed in contemporary Arabian style.

With views of the Arabian Gulf, golf club or the hotel's four swimming pools, the intimate rooms and suites feature oversized stand-alone bathtubs, rain showers and spacious balconies. The sumptuous Beach View and Garden View suites and villas are surrounded by landscaped gardens with private plunge pools and sun beds.

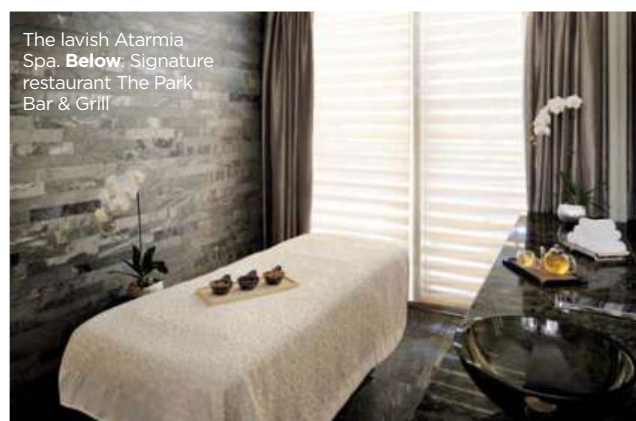
Explore Abu Dhabi's rich heritage at the nearby Saadiyat Cultural District, set sail on a sunset cruise, go diving or observe endangered Hawksbill turtles nesting on Saadiyat beach. The golf club is just minutes away, offering an 18-hole course designed by golfing legend Gary Player.



The Executive Villa's terrace includes a private plunge pool



Some rooms and suites overlook the Saadiyat Beach Golf Club



The lavish Atarmia Spa. **Below:** Signature restaurant The Park Bar & Grill

Business travellers are catered to with 11 flexible function rooms and an exclusive outdoor venue, The Garden, for cocktail receptions and gala dinners.

Indulge at day spa, Atarmia, with nine spacious treatment rooms, outdoor private terraces, fitness facilities and a tennis court, while the kids are entertained at Camp Hyatt.

Signature restaurant The Park Bar & Grill is home to a theatrical show kitchen serving a selection of grilled meats, poultry and seafood. The Café is the place for Arabic specialities, while the Beach House dishes up Mediterranean fare with impressive views of the Arabian Gulf. The hotel's award-winning tea lounge, The Library, offers premier tea, coffee and pastries in a contemporary, serene setting.

For more information call 00971-2-407 1234
or visit abudhabi.park.hyatt.com



Word of mouth

AMMAN ■ CANARY ISLANDS ■ PORTOFINO ■ MORE TRAVEL NEWS

WORDS: RACHEL HOWARD; PHOTO: GEORGE MESSARITAKIS

I SPY WITH MY LITTLE EYE

...something beginning with sea. Impassive stone sentinels have been keeping watch over one of Greece's wildest coastlines for centuries, but now one has let its guard down

The Mani Peninsula, the middle finger of the Peloponnese, has a reputation for fearsome locals who are less than welcoming to outsiders. It's a stark, jagged cape punctuated with around 800 towers, which the great travel writer Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor – who settled in Greece's wild deep south – likened to “bundles of petrified asparagus”. On a clifftop overlooking the southernmost tip is Tainaron Blue Retreat, an early-19th-century watchtower that's just opened as a three-room guest house. The architect owners Kostas Zouvelos and Kassiani Theodorakakou came across the tower on holiday 20 years ago. “The view was incredible, the silence intense,” Zouvelos recalls. “The previous owner had

painted ‘for sale’ on a cornerstone. We called the same day.” The renovation took five years: “The locals could not understand why we changed the shade of grouting twice so the building disappears into the landscape,” says Zouvelos. “We used traditional materials and techniques, but we didn't want the interior to look like a museum.” Instead, with exposed stone, wood and steel, bedrooms are austere yet intimate and the dramatic infinity pool is suspended between rock, sea and sky. According to Greek mythology, the cave at the tip of this cape was the entrance to the underworld, but this feels more like heaven's gate.

Doubles from AED 560; 0030-273-330 0461, tainaron-blue.com



Enjoy unobstructed views of Greece's wild deep south coast from this cliffside retreat

CULTURAL AWAKENING

Amman

The formerly sleepy neighbourhood of Jabal Al Weibdeh in the Jordanian capital is shaking things up with stylish new cafés-cum-art galleries, boutique social spaces and culinary pop-ups

Recent years have seen a steady increase in the people traffic along Jabal Al Weibdeh's leafy backstreets, where historic houses and a pedestrian-friendly environment have attracted a cosmopolitan cultural community that is busy re-designing the local landscape.

HIP HOTEL

Each of the tastefully themed rooms at **Locanda Boutique Hotel** (00962-6-460 2020) is dedicated to a different Arabic musician. "We have tried to include all the greats while also representing as many countries from the region as possible," says owner Saad Darwazeh, a local Ammanite with a penchant for cultural pursuits. His boutique hotel, which opens its doors this month, will serve as an outlet for several of these passions, with a jazz bar downstairs providing a platform for regional musical talent while upstairs will be Amman's first art house cinema.

SOCIAL SPACE

Part restaurant/café, part art gallery, part cultural space, **Jasmine House** (00962-6-461 1879) is about sharing ideas over food with friends. The journey began 28 years ago, in southern Italy, as a peaceful initiative among youth rebelling against the disharmony in the mafia-ruled area by injecting some art and beauty into the community, says co-founder Sami Haven. Since then, he and his friends have created these communities wherever they go, ensuring there's always an opportunity to share food and ideas in a beautiful setting. In Jabal Al Weibdeh, the space is open to the public, offering a conducive environment for artists, musicians, writers and the like to eat, work, talk, think and create.

CULTURE CAFÉ

It has taken over a year to restore a crumbling Twenties-era mansion and turn it into **Naqsh Café & Cultural Space** (00962-79-601 8272). It would have taken far longer if not for the army of volunteers who dropped by each day to lend a hand, upcycling old furniture and renovating



the overgrown garden to turn it into an outdoor idyll complete with armchairs set among the trees and organic vegetables growing out of salvaged window frames. Now five months in, the volunteers have become restaurant regulars, along with their friends and friends of friends, transforming this once-abandoned house into one of the city's most cosmopolitan spaces and a hotbed of creativity.

ART HUB

Art, education and food are the core motivators behind **Lesser Amman Library** (lesserammanlibrary.com). The new art-library-cum-café launches this month, bringing a new dimension to the area's art scene as a place for up-and-coming artists to work, learn and mingle with like-minded creatives. It's also a social space for the neighbourhood's café-frequenting crowd, says founder Noura al Khasawneh, who hopes that the dining aspect of her new venture will fund the art and education elements, allowing her to furnish the library with recommendations from visiting artists who participate in the three-month residencies she runs, sharing their knowledge with aspiring local talents.

POP-UP DINING

Sudfa Market comes to Jabal Al Weibdeh on the first Saturday of every month, with a varying selection of stalls selling farm-fresh produce, local handicrafts and home-made food. People come to eat as well as



Clockwise from top: The bustling Jabal Al Weibdeh neighbourhood; Sudfa Market; Jasmine House



browse and socialise, gathering around the street-food stand as they're lured in by the emanating aromas. More recently, The Farmer's Market team has branched out into pop-up breakfasts and mini markets held at **Fann Wa Chai** – a tea house art gallery next door to the market. Delicious organic dinners are the latest addition to the team's pop-up repertoire, with healthy home-cooked dishes such as *melanzane parmigiana*, vegetarian quiche and *qallayet bandoura* (a fragrant tomato stew) available every Friday and Saturday evening.

BEST BITES

With many of its food spots concentrated along the same stretch, Jabal Al Weibdeh is perfectly placed for eating on the go. Stop in at the new **Boutique Bakery** (00962-7-9651 4789), where the wedges of chewy chocolate brownie are every bit as good as they look, or pick up an éclair from **Pâtisserie Fairouz** (00962-6-462 1912), known for its decadent and delicious cream cakes. Linger over a first-rate Italian espresso at **Rumi Café** (00962-6-464 4131) amid its ever-present hipster clientele, or enjoy home-style dishes in a cosy conservatory at family-run kitchen **Joz Hind** (00962-77-933 4783), the place for healthy lunches.

WORDS: OLIVIA CUTHBERT; PHOTOS: CAROLINE BACH, SAMI HAVEN

MADE IN ITALY

Channel the effortless style of the Italian Riviera in colourful printed dresses, sandals, swimwear and accessories, part of Dolce & Gabbana's online Portofino capsule collection, which captures the Ligurian fishing village – and celebrity haunt – in **illustrated scenes of its picturesque harbour**, with bobbing boats backed by multi-hued houses.

Bathing suit, AED 2,100; espadrilles, AED 1,300; tote bag, AED 7150; all **Dolce & Gabbana**, exclusively at net-a-porter.com



Clockwise from top left: Spot Dessert Bar in New York; Banana Tree in Seoul; Chikalicious Dessert Bar in Dubai



ON TREND

Just desserts

Ditch dinner (and the diet) and skip straight to the finale at these spots serving only the sweet stuff

With a five-course dessert menu that changes monthly and the opportunity to watch the chefs at work from the bar counter, **The William Curley Dessert Bar** (0044-207-730 5522, williamcurley.com) in London's Belgravia is the perfect stop for sweet treats washed down with bubbles. Stateside, **Spot Dessert Bar** (001-212-677 5670, spotdessertbar.com) in New York features an all-pudding "tapas" menu with an Asian twist, including exotic ingredients like green tea, yuzu and kabocha squash (don't miss the chocolate green tea lava cake or Thai tea crème brûlée). In Seoul, **Banana Tree** (0065-6221 5020) specialises in garden-themed desserts like banana pudding with Oreo "soil" served in plant pots with spade-shaped spoons, while Down Under, **The Aviary Dessert Kitchen** (0061-8-8332 4646, aviarydessertkitchen.com.au) in Adelaide is a pastel palace of perfectly plated cakes and macarons on sticks. Closer to home, curb your cravings at **Chikalicious Dessert Bar** (00971-4-344 4700), the Dubai outpost of the famous New York eatery, which is said to have coined the terms "dessert bar" and "dessert club". Try one of their famous dough'ssants (like a cronut but double baked instead of fried) in jasmine, lavender or date flavour.

Underwater world

Artist Jason deCaires Taylor unveils Europe's first underwater museum this month, off the coast of Lanzarote

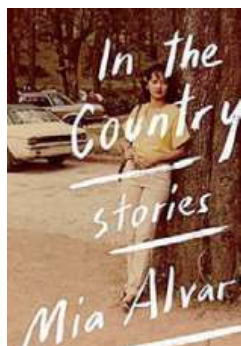
Known for his underwater creations, often based on living people, deCaires Taylor debuts *Museo Atlántico* this month, comprising 10 installations made up of more than 300 individual sculptures displayed on the seabed of a sheltered bay near Playa Blanca on Lanzarote island. Visitors can snorkel and dive among the quirky sculptures – designed to create an environmentally friendly marine habitat for plants and sea creatures – or view them from a glass-bottomed boat. The British sculptor, marine conservationist, underwater photographer and scuba diving instructor is also behind the world's first underwater sculpture park off Grenada in the Caribbean; a submerged museum in Cancún, Mexico; and the world's largest single underwater sculpture, "Ocean Atlas", a 5m, 60-tonne female statue off the Bahamas. underwatersculpture.com



The *Museo Atlántico* sculptures, which will be submerged under the sea off Lanzarote this month

BOOK SHELF

What to read...



WHEN YOU'RE BETWEEN MEETINGS

The men and women in Mia Alvar's collection of short stories, *In the Country* (Knopf) – most memorably, expat Filipinos working as engineers and maids in Bahrain –

share a profound sense of dislocation, either because of the unfamiliar place they find themselves in or because they no longer recognise their own country. Each story requires a minimal time commitment but feels as complete as a novel.



WHEN YOU'RE ON A NEVER-ENDING LONG-HAUL FLIGHT

China Rich Girlfriend (Doubleday), Kevin Kwan's frothy sequel to his debut novel, *Crazy Rich Asians*, revisits the worlds of Hong Kong and Singapore's super-

super-elite. Kwan himself is from Singapore, and these sharply observed books have an insider's authority. *Girlfriend* is so diverting that it might make you forget that your seatmate on that flight from New York to Dubai is muttering to himself non-stop.



WHEN YOU NEED STYLE INSPIRATION

Writer, stylist and *Condé Nast Traveler* contributor Amanda Brooks' *Always Pack A Party Dress* (Blue Rider) – an

illustrated memoir about what she calls her "(half) life in fashion" and her move from the fashion bubble of Manhattan to a farm in the English countryside with her family – makes the soigné life look (almost) achievable.

GAME NIGHT

Board games and beverages: it's a combination that has long sustained house parties. Now, Belgravia's **The Halkin Bar is getting in on the game with a backgammon set** – crafted specially by British luxury goods makers William & Son in the bar's taupe and deep-purple colours. Though the hotel's bespoke set is not for sale, around the corner in Mayfair, enthusiasts of the ancient game can pop into William & Son for one of their own.



Backgammon sets from AED 9,750, William & Son

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The vintage F13 from 1919 revolutionised the airline industry with its all-metal design

Vintage flight

The reconstruction of the world's first all-metal passenger aircraft offers a trip back in time

In 1919, at the end of World War I, the first Junkers F13 plane took to the skies. The lightweight, all-metal, cantilever low-wing aircraft superseded traditional wooden models and became known for its reliability, robustness and low-maintenance design, effectively laying the foundation for modern air travel and revolutionising the industry. In homage to this piece of aviation history, luggage-maker Rimowa is bringing the iconic aircraft back to life. With the same open cockpit, single engine and lightweight, grooved aluminium design (which has inspired the brand's trademark luggage since the Fifties), the Rimowa F13 will take its maiden flight in March. "The F13 represents a revolution in aviation," says Dieter Morszeck, president & CEO of

Rimowa. "Although the pilots were still exposed to the elements, the four passengers in the cabin could cover long distances quickly and in comfort. Hugo Junkers made his dream come true by improving the transport links between countries." A detailed 3D laser scan of an F13 in a Parisian museum was used to create the replica, which took years of planning and 15 months to construct. It was recently unveiled at the EEA AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and from next year vintage plane enthusiasts can have their own F13 built to order by new Swiss-based company Rimowa Flugzeugwerke AG. A limited-edition luggage collection to celebrate the launch will also be released next summer. rimowa-f13.com

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TECH CHECK

The future of travel

A stellar round-up of the technology that could transform your next trip by Wired.co.uk's editor Nate Lanxon

REAL-TIME MOBILE TRANSLATION

This year, language barriers will be chipped away at harder than ever – and Google wants to be the pickaxe. Its acquisition of the Word Lens mobile app means deciphering menus and street signs will be as easy as holding up your phone and reading the translation on-screen.

VIRTUAL REALITY

It may seem daft, but virtual-reality headsets could change the way you fly. Case in point: Airbus. Last year it filed a patent to use them on its planes to give passengers a feeling of physically being somewhere other than 40,000 feet over the Atlantic – already at their destination or perhaps just sitting up in First Class. On top of that, Facebook now owns Oculus, the leading maker of the headsets. It's fair to assume Mark Zuckerberg has big plans.

3D-PRINTED STAYS

In 2014 a Chinese company called WinSun used a 32m printer to produce 10 houses in one day, each made from blocks formed by printing layers of cement-glass mix. In America this year, architect Adam Kushner aims to build the world's first 3D-printed estate, and a canal house has been created in Amsterdam. It won't be long before such buildings appear as holiday rentals and on festival campsites.

THE DEATH OF ROAMING

"Bill shock", the term applied to the horror of returning from holiday to discover you owe a mobile network thousands, will be no more for those in Europe. A European parliamentary decision has been made in 2015 to end all roaming charges in the EU member states by mid-2017. Cue WhatsApp from the beach and a flood of holiday selfies. Let's hope it catches on here, too.

Spa vs spa

Two big hitters in the wellness game have new outposts in the Middle East



SIX SENSES SPA

WHERE: Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Muscat

DESIGN: Nestled against a backdrop of the Hajar Mountains and following the contours of the *wadi*, the independent spa building spread over 3,000sqm reflects Omani architecture with domed ceilings, elegant arched walkways and stone columns.

FACILITIES: 17 treatment rooms, including some double rooms; three hammams; three beauty rooms; relaxation lounges; steam rooms, some with light therapy; infrared and normal saunas; indoor pool overlooking the Arabian Gulf.

PRODUCTS BY: The Organic Pharmacy and Margy's Monte Carlo, with another brand to be added later this year.

TREATMENTS: Inspired by Arabic rituals. Try the Hydra-diamond Exfoliation Facial, Rose Renewal scrub and wrap and the Royal Hammam experience.



SPA BY CLARINS

WHERE: Marsa Malaz Kempinski The Pearl, Doha

DESIGN: At the heart of the hotel complex, the soothing earthy tones of the spa area are complemented by gold, silver and pearl detailing as well as traditional mosaic work. A bespoke Swarovski chandelier hangs in the reception and, as in the rest of the hotel, art abounds, including a glass sculpture by Czech artist Jiří Šuhájek.

FACILITIES: 23 treatments rooms; sauna and steam rooms; indoor plunge pools; hammam; relaxation lounges; spa suites; spa café.

PRODUCTS BY: Clarins

TREATMENTS: Inspired by the brand's philosophy of feeling good and looking good. Try the Anti-Ageing Facial Programs, Clarins Tonic Body Polisher and Rebalancing Massage with Essential Oils.



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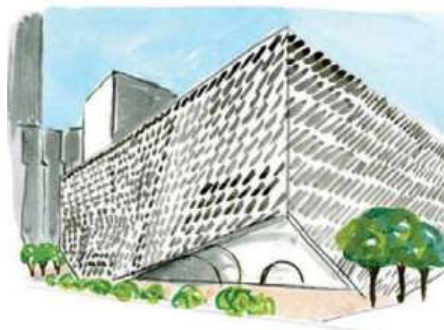
If they build it, we will go

Remember Bilbao before Frank Gehry built the Guggenheim there in 1997? Anyone...? Cultural institutions by starchitects have a way of transforming – even reinventing – cities. And these six museums and concert halls are about to do just that



ABU DHABI LOUVRE ABU DHABI

The long-anticipated first satellite of France's crown jewel opens in December. With its otherworldly perch on Saadiyat Island and striking latticed dome, the saucer-like Jean Nouvel structure is right at home alongside other standouts by Zaha Hadid, Frank Gehry and Tadao Ando. The museum's inaugural exhibit will feature seminal pieces by Da Vinci, David, Manet and Matisse, all on loan from the Louvre and other Parisian institutions such as the Musée Rodin, the Musée d'Orsay and the Centre Pompidou-Metz.
louvreabudhabi.ae



LOS ANGELES THE BROAD

The new museum from LA mega-patrons Eli and Edythe Broad opens on September 20. Perhaps best known for bailing out Los Angeles' Museum of Contemporary Art in 2008, the Broads are finally unveiling a physical testament to their staggering might in the city's cultural landscape. Their Downtown LA, Diller Scofidio + Renfro-designed museum (a slick behemoth resembling a white-mesh cage) will host rotating displays of the 2,000-plus era-defining artworks by Andy Warhol, Ed Ruscha, Cindy Sherman, Jeff Koons and others they've amassed over the years.
thebroad.org



MOSCOW GARAGE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

The permanent home of collector and curator Dasha Zhukova's cultural hub opened on June 12. Rem Koolhaas used a prefab concrete pavilion from the Sixties as the bones for this bold structure that, along with the Garage's current home, designed by Shigeru Ban, will be key to the revitalisation of Gorky Park – a constructivist-imagined oasis that had fallen into disrepair. Expect to see new commissions of contemporary Russian art and a retrospective dedicated to artist and sculptor Louise Bourgeois this month.
garageccc.com



NEW YORK WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

The New York institution's post-Breuer Building digs opened on May 1. Standing sturdy and steely at the intersection between the High Line's southernmost entrance and Manhattan's far west side, Renzo Piano's 21st-century Whitney is one of downtown's most significant new structures. It opened with the largest showing to date from the museum's 21,000-piece permanent collection (which includes works by Barbara Kruger and Mike Kelley), making good use of the vast indoor and outdoor exhibition space.
whitney.org



RIO DE JANEIRO MUSEUM OF IMAGE AND SOUND

A new beachfront home celebrating mixed media opens in 2016. Sandwiched between Rio's cityscape and Copacabana, MIS's ribbon-like property was conceived by New York's Diller Scofidio + Renfro as a kind of vertical extension of the beach and the adjacent stone promenade, originally completed in 1970. The museum explores the past, the present and the future of audio-visual communication, from archival broadcasts to video installations and film. With ocean views throughout, a rooftop movie theatre is likely to be a major draw.
mis.rj.gov.br



TAIPEI TAIPEI PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

This space-age contribution to the city's skyline opens in 2016. For starters, the building, designed by OMA partners Rem Koolhaas and David Gianotten, resembles a cannonball that's lodged itself into a giant, malleable ice cube. In addition to its Instagram appeal, OMA's design is notable for its three major theatres – and its ability to accommodate just about any production, including challenging ones like Bernd Alois Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten*, a 1965 opera that, when staged in New York in 2008, required a 236ft runway.

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...AND RELAX



Chicken liver pâté, grain mustard, cornichons and house preserves at laV



TUCKING INTO TEXAS

Long a melting pot of cultures, Austin has now become one of America's most exciting culinary destinations, finds OLIVER ROBINSON

"BUT THERE MUST BE A mistake," I splutter. "We ordered enchiladas for one." No sooner do the words fall out of my mouth than I realise that the mountain of meat, tortilla and refried beans that has landed in front of me is, in fact, a single portion. *My* single portion. I look over to my wife for help, but she has a barrel-sized burrito to contend with. They say everything's bigger in Texas, and they're right.

Secretly, though, I'm delighted by the seemingly unfeasible amount of food we've been served at **Guero's** (*entrées from AED 30; 001-512-447 7688, guerostacobar.com*), a taqueria that's a mainstay of the city. There's something of a culinary revolution taking place in Austin, and I'm ready to tuck in. Starting with the challenge before us – which we rise to, polishing our plates to a gleam. While Guero's might not be awarded any Michelin stars any time soon, the place sure knows how to nail comfort food.

Satiated, we exit on to sunny South Congress Avenue. SoCo, as the locals refer

to it, is one of Austin's hippest streets, lined with boutique hotels, restaurants, tattoo parlours, vintage shops and jazz clubs. The buzz here sums up the energy in Austin. It is, after all, a city on the up. In 2013, the FBI declared it the second safest major city in America, while *Forbes* ranked it number one on its 2011 list of the US's 'Next Biggest Boom Towns' and second in last year's 'Future Job Growth' ranking. Austin is also one of the country's top destinations for venture capitalists, and a thriving hub for the tech industry (computer company Dell was started right here in a University of Texas dorm room).

And then there's the food. Ah, the food.

We've only just left Guero's yet we are already being enticed by a food truck – a retro silver caravan that looks as if it should be on the campaign trail of a Fifties-era Congressman. But rather than sporting star-spangled banners and slogans, the truck is adorned with a chalkboard menu and smells suspiciously like jerk chicken. Suspiciously good jerk chicken. Having eaten our bodyweight in burrito, it's time for a second lunch.

We eventually make it back to our lodgings at the **Hotel San José** (*doubles from AED 1,030; 001-512-852 2360, sanjosehotel.com*). Formerly a rundown motel, the hotel is now a slick, minimalist boutique property situated in the



Brussels sprouts, fish
caramel, lemon and chilli at
Uchiko. **Left:** The restaurant's
private dining room

heart of South Congress. Inside is a laid-back bar and the popular Jo's coffee shop; the parking lot is a venue for festivals, events and (occasionally) parking cars.

"South Congress is 'the whole enchilada'," quips Meghan Hughes, the hotel's general manager. "It has the Continental Club, where you can stumble in for some amazing blues, jazz and honky-tonk on any given night. You'll quite often find locals out in the hotel parking lot two-steppin' or enjoying a cold drink in the Texas sunshine."

We squeeze in a quick power nap before our next culinary adventure: an evening at **Uchiko** (*entrées from AED 55; 001-512-916 4808, uchiaustin.com/uchiko*), American sushi master Tyson Cole's second restaurant brand. Cole, a James Beard Award winner, is the creative force behind multiple-accolade-winning Uchi, and was mentor to chef Paul Qui (now with his own James Beard Award and a restaurant called Qui). Cole is among the chefs credited for Austin's gastronomic greatness.

I'm lucky to score five minutes with him that Friday evening. I appreciate just how valuable these minutes are when we arrive at Uchiko: it's early yet, but the place is already packed. Customers hover by the bar, waiting to be called to a table; those lucky enough to be seated seem beside themselves with excitement. The atmosphere is infectious.

Cole emerges from the melee to greet us. He's polite and mild-mannered, a world away from the firebreathing, usually British chefs

SoCo, as the locals refer to it, is one of Austin's hippest streets, lined with boutique hotels, restaurants, tattoo parlours, vintage shops and jazz clubs. The buzz here sums up the energy in Austin. And then there's the food

who seem to be all over television. And, unlike those chefs I've seen on TV, Cole still works in the kitchen. His culinary path, it turns out, started with a part-time job in a Japanese restaurant when he was a student at the University of Texas. He fell in love with sushi and went on to hone the craft in New York and Tokyo – picking up fluent Japanese along the way – before opening Uchi in Austin.

But why Austin? "I was already here, and I already had a loyal clientele," Cole says. "And the timing was... serendipitous."

"Have you ever read any Malcolm Gladwell?" he asks suddenly.

I admit that I haven't but that I've heard of Gladwell's theory that it takes roughly 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert at something.

"Yeah, exactly," enthuses Cole. "I spent 10,000 hours making sushi, and by 2003, sushi was just starting to get popular – but not *too* popular. So I knew that, as an American master sushi chef, I had a niche. I could communicate to the American customer what I thought was fantastic about sushi. And so I opened Uchi."

Cole likens his own rise to that of celebrity master sushi chef Nobu. "I think it's the same▶



Bustling South
Congress Avenue



as when Nobu started,” he explains. “It was about timing for him, too. He said: I’m going to combine Peruvian flavours and sushi. It was different and it became global. I think Uchi is the new Nobu, I really do.”

These are bold words, but it seems Cole has put his money where his mouth is. With three hugely successful restaurants to his name – Uchi in Austin and Houston, and Uchiko – it seems foolish to argue. Aside from his own success, Cole is clearly pleased with Austin’s growing status as a culinary and cultural hotspot. “I think it’s blowing up right now,” he tells me. “Before, you could open a restaurant and let it run for a decade or so and there wouldn’t be any competition, but now there’s crazy competition. People are raising the bar, they’re trying harder and harder, and that’s what’s great about our food scene.”

I’m conscious at this point that I’ve taken much more than five minutes of Cole’s time. We say our goodbyes and he disappears back into the kitchen, leaving us to dive into the menu.

First up, a lettuce leaf. But not just any lettuce leaf – a hydroponic lettuce leaf. The cynic in me is blown away the minute I take a bite. It is a chlorophyll-filled explosion of flavour, complimented wonderfully by a jalapeño edamame dip. Texas meets Japan in one tiny entrée. The rest of the meal continues in much the same vein. Small, pristine parcels of flavour are presented one after the other – artfully arranged Atlantic salmon, lacinated kale, pear and *yuzu*; tarabagani king crab with beets; *Sekkai-ka* (sea urchin, *shiso* leaf, celery root and golden brook trout roe).

The next Nobu? By the end of the meal, I’m a believer.

First up, a lettuce leaf. But not just any lettuce leaf – a hydroponic lettuce leaf. The cynic in me is blown away the minute I take a bite. It is a chlorophyll-filled explosion of flavour – Texas meets Japan

THE FOLLOWING MORNING WE SWAP THE low-rise bohemian cool of SoCo for the shining skyscrapers of Downtown. This is the focal point for the city’s multitude of start-ups and its tech industry. Cranes, construction and newly completed high-rises punctuate the skyline – none more prominent than the gunmetal-grey W Austin building.

We’re here for brunch, the weekend meal that has become something of an Austin institution. Any self-respecting restaurant in the city serves it, but none with the panache of the W’s **Trace** (*entrées from AED 55; 001-512-542 3660, traceaustin.com*), which treats brunch less as a meal and more like a party. Inside, spiky chandeliers hover over retro-styled white chairs, slate-black square tables and velvet-black sofas. The wall to our right is a mosaic of mirrors, while the other is all tall windows opening out on to a terrace, allowing brunchers to take the party on to the street.

The resident disc jockey – DJ I Wanna Be Her – wouldn’t look out of place at an Ibiza beach bar, and spins an ambient soundtrack

A private dining area at Trace. **Left:** The hot rock “sear it yourself” Wagyu beef at Uchiko



to which yoghurt parfait, home-cured smoked salmon, pancakes, biscuits and gravy, salads, sandwiches and a multitude of egg dishes are served. Drinks and dishes are both affordably priced, meaning you don’t hold back over the typical four-hour duration of the meal.

Downtown Austin may as well be a separate town from South Congress – there’s a different atmosphere and I can’t help thinking that even the people look distinct (more Vuitton than vintage shop). Of course, diversity is precisely part of Austin’s charm – yet the city is united by its overall feel-good vibe, great food and the locals’ predilection to party.

Inspired, we decide to kill time before dinner by wandering down 6th Street, famous for its nightspots, live music, galleries and (still more) food trucks. There’s something for everyone, from students to young (and old) professionals, hipsters, clean-cut preppers and regular Joes. As the sun begins to set, 6th becomes illuminated in colourful neon, while the sounds of bands playing their trade in various bars melds into one heady soundtrack.

This sensory overload helps us regain our appetites in time for dinner at **laV** (*entrées from AED 110; 001-512-391 1888, lavaustin.com*) on East 7th. laV – as in “*c’est la vie*” – is one of Austin’s most talked-about restaurants. The interior, designed by architects Bobby McAlpine and David Baker, is split into two main rooms. The first part is a dimly lit tasting room, its walls lined with bottles of vintage.



Gulf shrimp and grits are on the brunch menu at Trace



The second, the dining area, is symmetrically arranged with dark-wood tables bedecked with shining glassware and flanked by grey sofas. At one end, a large window looks out on to 7th; at the other, the chef's table stands behind two glass doors.

The grandeur of the setting is matched by the food, creations by executive chef Allison Jenkins who, at the behest of laV's owners Ralph and Lisa Eads, has created a menu combining Mediterranean and French Provençal styles of cooking with locally sourced Texan ingredients. Dishes such as the farro and beet salad (arugula leaves, pecorino hard cheese with pistachio pesto), and the *bourride* (a monkfish stew with aioli, cockles, scallops, saffron and tomato) prove a triumph.

Later, as we head out into the night, it's with full bellies and smiles on our faces. We've toured the city via moreish Mexican fare and delicate Japanese dishes, jerk chicken served from the side of a truck and buttermilk pancakes at brunch. Each restaurant and every dish reflecting the wild variety that has shaped Austin's cultural landscape. **CNT**

Getting there

Emirates (emirates.com) and Qatar Airways (qatarairways.com) fly direct to Houston from where it's a two-and-a-half-hour drive to Austin



Above: The dining area at laV looks out on to 7th. **Left:** A tobacco cream chocolate mousse, pecan and blueberry dessert at Uchiko

Where to stay

CELEBRITY HOTELS ■ JEREMY RENNER ■ STOCKHOLM

WORDS: JENNY KING; PHOTOS: CORBIS, ALAMY, GETTY IMAGES, ALI MORADMAND

A-LIST ABODES

Robert De Niro isn't the only luminary in the hospitality game. These celeb-owned hotels will ensure you get the star treatment

BELIZE

BLANCANEUX LODGE

Francis Ford Coppola

Academy Award-winning director Francis Ford Coppola has properties all around the world, from Italy and Argentina to Guatemala and this one in Belize. Blancaneux Lodge in San Ignacio is a dramatic rainforest hideaway that was the Coppola family retreat for a decade before it was opened up to the public. The 20 cabanas, villas and cottages are surrounded by thick vegetation and tumbling waterfalls with private plunge pools. Sitting beside a creek, the Waterfall Spa offers Thai treatments and dips in a rejuvenating hot pool. Doubles from AED 1,200; 001-866-356 5881, www.coppolaresorts.com/blancaneux ▶





NEW YORK BEDFORD POST INN Richard Gere

This charming eight-room country inn, an hour north of New York City, was restored by actor Richard Gere, his former wife Carey Lowell and builder Russell Hernández. There's a yoga studio on site as well as the fine-dining Campagna, helmed by award-winning chef Michael White, and laid-back rustic eatery The Barn. Gere, a local resident who it's rumoured discovered the property while out horse riding, insisted on eco-friendly details like using reclaimed wood, geothermal cooling and seasonal, local, farm-to-table ingredients. *Doubles from AED 1,930; 001-914-205 3773, bedfordpostinn.com*



DUBLIN THE CLARENCE HOTEL Bono and The Edge

In the heart of Ireland's vibrant capital city, on the River Liffey, this contemporary boutique hotel co-owned by U2's Bono and The Edge is the place to see and be seen around these parts, housing the stylish Octagon Bar and Michelin-star chef Oliver Dunne's Cleaver East restaurant. Classic Shaker oak furniture in the 50 rooms is complemented by white linens and custom-designed pieces by local artisans; the two-level, 2,000sqft Penthouse Suite comes with two bedrooms, a fully fitted kitchen and a panoramic roof terrace. *Doubles from AED 680; 00353-1-407 0800, theclarence.ie*

A-LIST ABODES

QUEENSLAND GWINGANNA LIFESTYLE RETREAT

Hugh Jackman

After staying at this eco retreat, with views of the coastline and surrounding valley in the hinterland of Queensland's Gold Coast, actor Hugh Jackman invested in the property. The hotel combines fresh mountain air with spa treatments, yoga and meditation, and is made up of unique villas, houses and suites designed with reclaimed Australian timber in rich, warm tones. The low-tech environment encourages guests to switch off, relax and embrace Gwinganna Dreamtime, a "strategic rest period" each afternoon.

Doubles from AED 3,600

(two-night inclusive package);

0061-75-589 5000, gwinganna.com



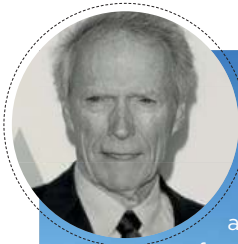
DUNBLAINE CROMLIX HOTEL

Andy Murray

Grand Slam-winning tennis star Andy Murray transformed a grand Victorian country house close to his hometown into a five-star, 15-bedroom mansion as a way to give something back to the community. Set in the picturesque Scottish countryside, the hotel has its own chapel, house loch and, of course, tennis courts, while each of the sumptuous suites – most of which feature hand-painted, free-standing baths in gold, silver and copper – are named after famous Scots such as poet Robert Burns and legendary former football manager Sir Alex Ferguson.

Doubles from AED 1,145; 0044-1786-822 125, cromlix.com ▶





CALIFORNIA MISSION RANCH Clint Eastwood

Actor and director Clint Eastwood – a long-time Carmel resident and former mayor – rescued this historic ranch and erstwhile dairy farm from condo developers before transforming it into a serene 31-room retreat. Set on 22 acres with views over Point Lobos, Carmel River Beach and the Pacific Ocean, the property also features a restaurant and piano bar where Eastwood, who owns a home nearby, can sometimes be spotted.

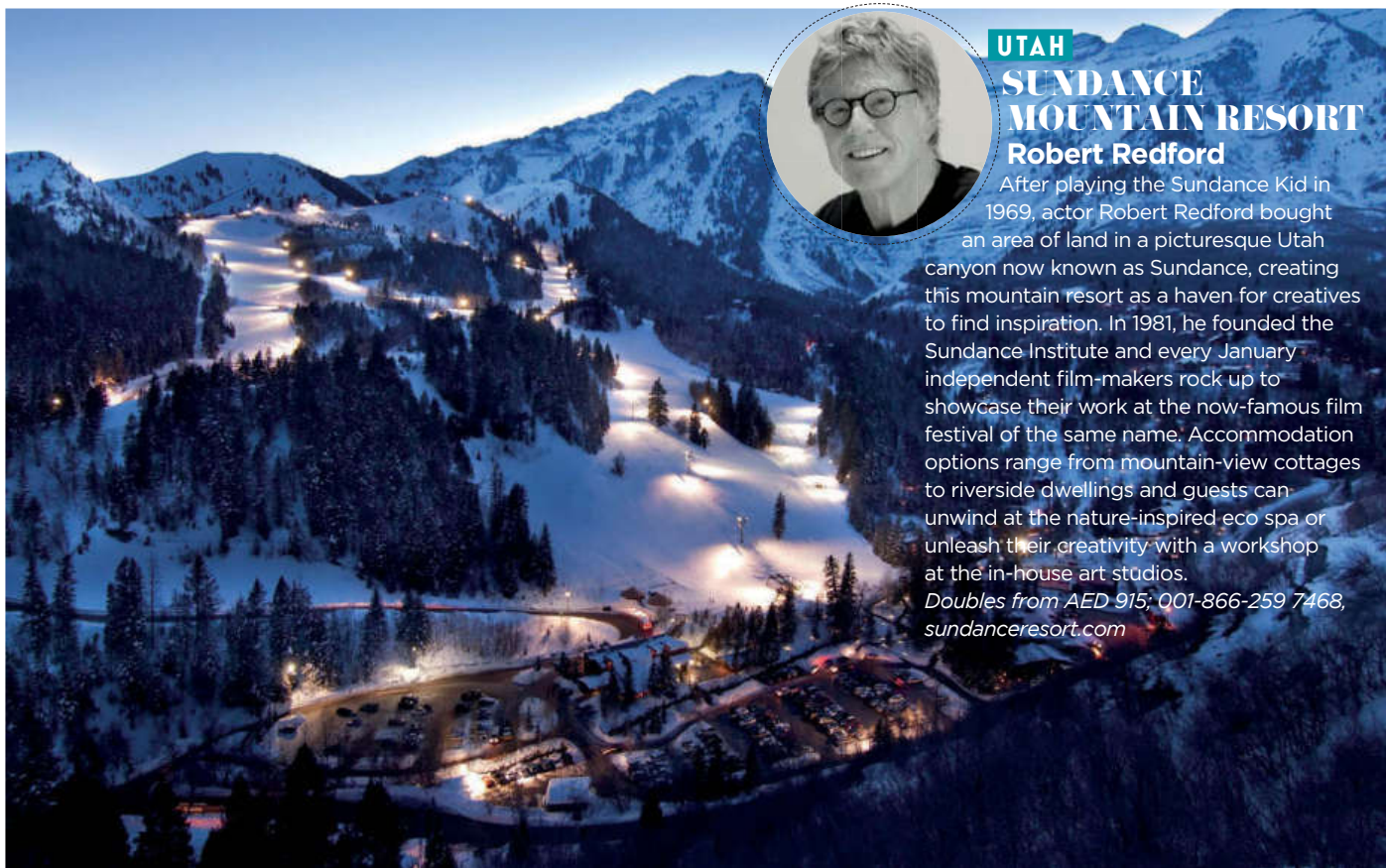
Doubles from AED 460; 001-831-624 6436, missionranchcarmel.com



UTAH SUNDANCE MOUNTAIN RESORT Robert Redford

After playing the Sundance Kid in 1969, actor Robert Redford bought an area of land in a picturesque Utah canyon now known as Sundance, creating this mountain resort as a haven for creatives to find inspiration. In 1981, he founded the Sundance Institute and every January independent film-makers rock up to showcase their work at the now-famous film festival of the same name. Accommodation options range from mountain-view cottages to riverside dwellings and guests can unwind at the nature-inspired eco spa or unleash their creativity with a workshop at the in-house art studios.

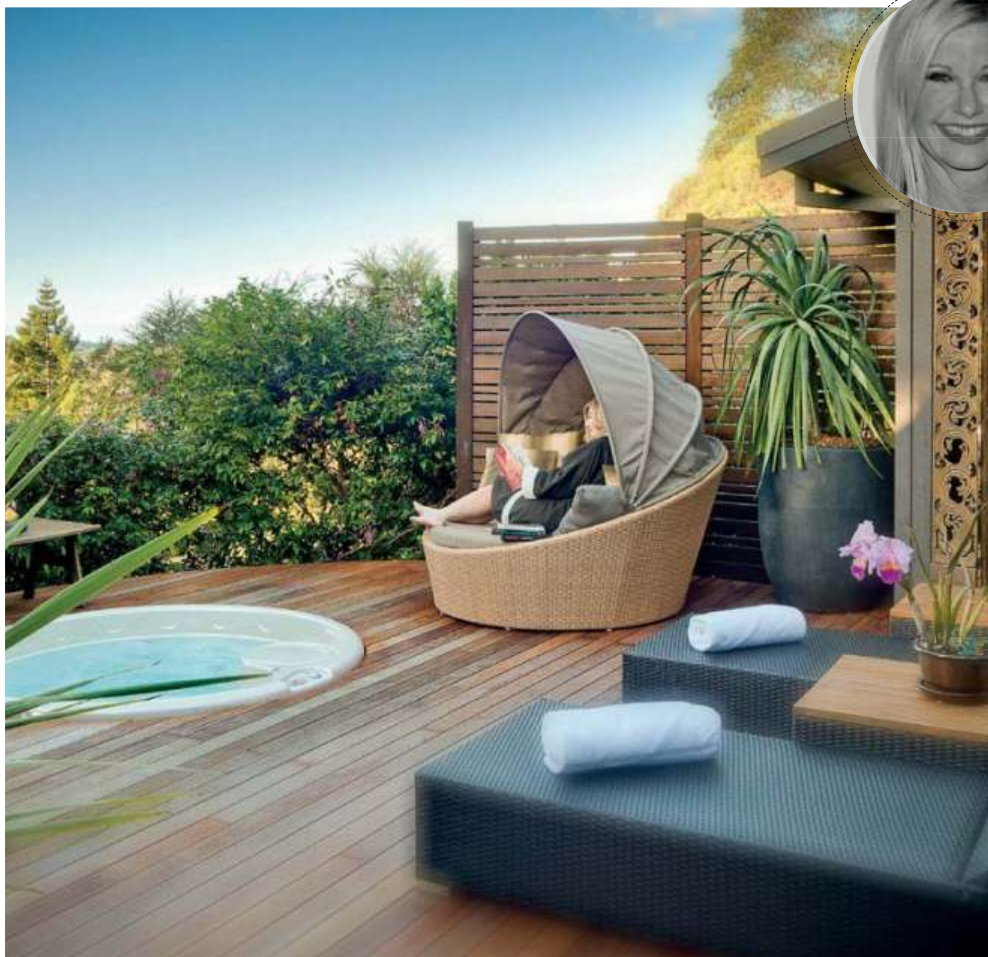
Doubles from AED 915; 001-866-259 7468, sundanceresort.com



NEW SOUTH WALES
GAIA RETREAT & SPA
Olivia Newton-John

This intimate boutique retreat, co-owned by singer and actress Olivia Newton-John, offers tailored wellness programmes addressing detox, weight loss and health and fitness within the serene surrounds of Australia's Byron Bay. Set on 25 lush acres of hinterland, the sustainably designed, 23-room resort houses the Gaia Day Spa with 14 treatment rooms, over 35 healers and therapists, and a daily-changing spa menu of healthy dishes made from produce picked in the on-site organic garden.

Doubles from AED 7,035 (two-night inclusive package); 0061-2-6687 1216, gaiaretreat.com.au


WATCH THIS SPACE

Actor and eco-warrior Leonardo DiCaprio has grand designs for an island resort off the coast of Belize



Long known for supporting environmental causes, DiCaprio has unveiled plans for a multimillion-dollar eco-resort on the unpopulated, 104-acre

Blackadore Caye island, which he purchased after falling in love with the country. Scheduled to open in 2018, the resort will have all the trappings of a luxury getaway with over-water villas, world-class restaurants and a lavish spa, but over half the island has been set aside as a protected wildlife preserve. The actor also hopes to reverse some of the damage done in the area, which suffers from overfishing and an eroding coastline. **CNT**



WHERE TO STAY

BED-HOPPING WITH... Jeremy Renner

The Mission: Impossible and The Avengers star, who renovates houses on the side, reveals his favourite stylish retreats



➤ LAS VENTANAS AL PARAISO, A ROSEWOOD RESORT

"Because Cabo is so close to LA, I can go here to decompress from work. It's private, tranquil and, well, it's Cabo man. Grab a villa, a crew of people and you don't even have to leave the hotel."

Doubles from AED 3,860; 0052-888-767 3966, rosewoodhotels.com

➤ CHARLOTTE STREET HOTEL

"I stay at Firmdale Hotels a lot, but mostly this one. They treat you well, the food is good and Charlotte Street is beautiful. The buildings are only maybe three stories high, so you get to see the sky."

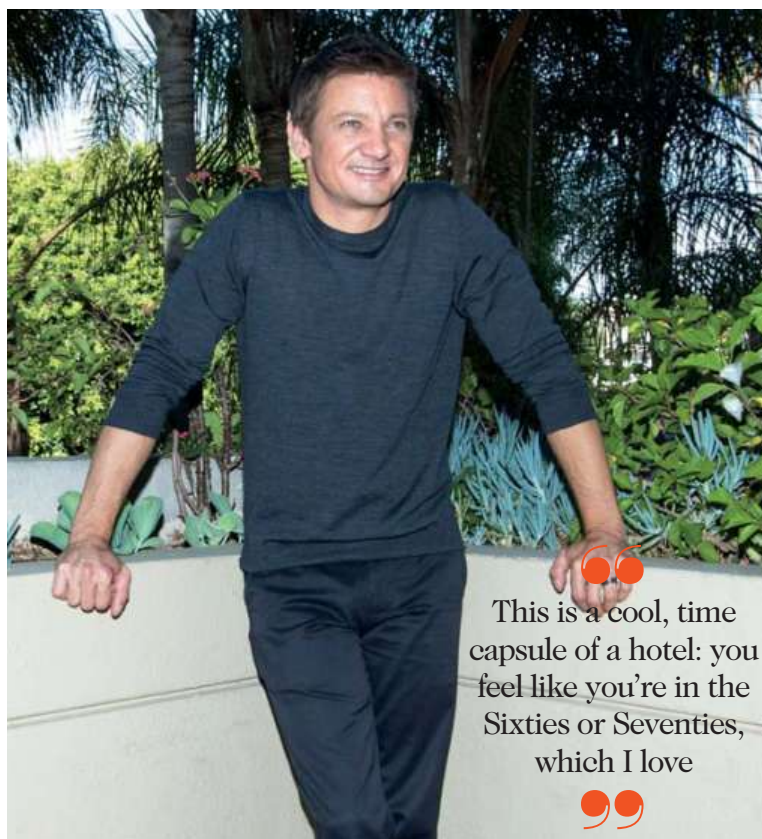
Doubles from AED 2,170; 0044-20-7806 2000, firmdalehotels.com



➤ SOHO HOUSE BERLIN

"I won't normally stay in a hotel for longer than a few weeks, but because of the size of the rooms here – they're giant, more like flats – I moved in for about three months while filming *Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters*. The bathroom had a steam shower, which was great because I was banging my body so much doing stunts."

Doubles from AED 445; 0049-30-405 0440, sohohouseberlin.com



This is a cool, time capsule of a hotel: you feel like you're in the Sixties or Seventies, which I love



➤ PARKER PALM SPRINGS

"This is a cool, time capsule of a hotel: you feel like you're in the Sixties or Seventies, which I love. The average room here isn't that spectacular, but there are some great little villas at the back which are comfy, cosy and private."

Doubles from AED 730; 001-760-770 5000, theparkerpalmsprings.com



➤ THE GREENWICH HOTEL

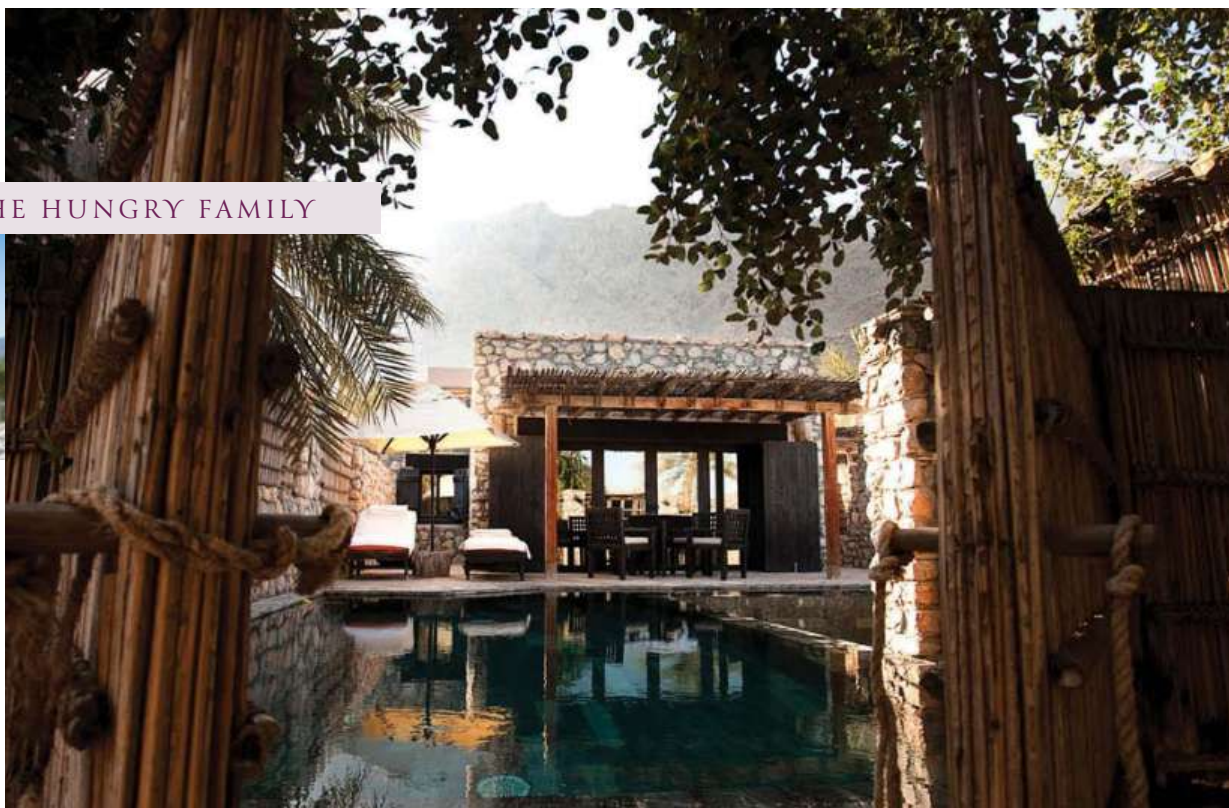
"I've been to really big hotels and, in fact, I used to work in one in Hawaii, but I prefer the individuality of small places. The Greenwich is a home away from home for me: the aesthetic, the vibe, the food. It's where I always go when I'm in New York. I kind of dig TriBeCa. It's close to the action but not right in the middle of it all."

Doubles from AED 2,390; 001-212-941 8600, thegreenwichhotel.com



INTERVIEW: FRANCESCA BABB; PHOTO: CORBIS

THE TALE OF THE HUNGRY FAMILY



I remember seeing two eyes peeping through the fence at the end of our garden,

I suddenly realised it was a mother goat and her hungry young kid who had made their way in to feast on the fallen fruits of the many date palms.

Nature was always on our doorstep.

Neil Harrison

sixsenses.com

For reservations: +968 26735 888

[Facebook.com/SixSensesZiggyBay](https://www.facebook.com/SixSensesZiggyBay) | [Twitter.com/ZiggyBay](https://twitter.com/ZiggyBay)

OUT OF THE ORDINARY



STOCKHOLM

Five classic hotels with an artistic twist

SCHOOL'S OUT

Opened last year in an **Art Nouveau building**, dating back to 1910 and once home to a private girls' school, **Miss Clara is a 92-room boutique hotel** with modern design by Swedish architect Gert Wingardh blending with period details. **In the heart of the city**, the hotel also houses a **brasserie serving Swedish fare**. *missclara hotel.com*

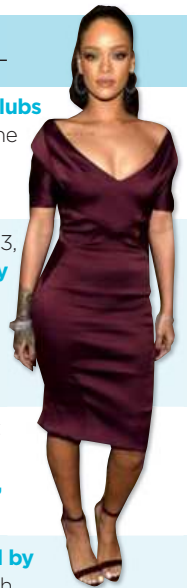


DESIGN



BOUTIQUE

	HOTEL BIRGER JARL	BERNS HOTEL
Location	In a quiet neighbourhood a 15-minute walk from the city centre, close to "the world's longest art gallery" , the Stockholm metro	Close to the city's major nightclubs (the best – Gallery 2.35:1 – is in the hotel) and between two parks
Décor	From the outside, it's a featureless seven-floor building from 1974. On the inside, it's an ode to modern Swedish design	The building, dating back to 1863, resembles Paris' Musée d'Orsay from the outside and used to be a concert hall and café, only becoming a hotel in 1989
Clientele	Young art and design buffs – the hotel lobby looks like a modern art gallery	Nobel Prize laureates who aren't staying at the Grand Hôtel, and famous faces including Rihanna, Bill Gates and the Dalai Lama
Rooms	The 271 rooms are a showcase of local design : Camilla Thulin, Filippa Knutsson and Jonny Johansson are among the designers who decorated the Cabin Rooms	Each of the 82 rooms, designed by Terence Conran , is furnished with a combination of designer and antique furniture
Food & Drink	Hotel Birger Jarl Dining & Bar serves Swedish dishes with a southern European accent like sea bass with fennel and salmon with avocado and tomatoes	Asian restaurant Berns Asiatiska serves tasty sushi rolls and dim sum . In the French restaurant, Berns Bistro & Bar, order the mussels and steak tartare
Strengths	Christian Walz, Daniel Lemma and other Swedish pop stars wrote a song for each suite (copies are available in reception)	Guests receive a VIP pass to all the nightclubs in town . In the Clock Suite, the classic clock adorning the tower of the hotel serves as one of the windows.
Weaknesses	The Wi-Fi signal in the rooms can be weak	There are big differences in room quality – some are quite dated and dark
Wi-Fi	Free	Free
Price	Doubles from AED 650	Doubles from AED 1,020
Contact	Tulegatan 8; 0046-8-674 1800, birgerjarl.se	Näckströmsgatan 8; 0046-8-5663 2200, berns.se



in the Swedish capital**RETREAT****GRAND HÔTEL**

On the waterfront in Strömkajen, opposite the Royal Palace and Gamla stan (the Old Town)

The first grand hotel in Stockholm, it was **built in 1874 and founded by Frenchman Régis Cadier**, former chef to the Russian ambassador

In 1901, the first banquet for the Nobel Prize award ceremony took place here. In 1929 it moved to City Hall, but the **laureates and their families** continue to stay here

The 247 rooms are decorated in grand style: **satin bedspreads and upholstery**, and heavy curtains



Michelin-starred Mathias Dahlgren heads Matsalen, with five- and eight-course "natural cuisine" menus, as well as bistro Matbaren. Menus change seasonally, based on the chef's mood

The Nordic Spa offers excellent Swedish massages and bathing rituals like the Nordic Bath de Luxe, which includes a nourishing mask and a glass of bubbly

There are **not enough tables at breakfast**: on Sundays you'll have to queue. It's easier to eat at one of the nearby cafés

FreeDoubles from **AED 1,795**Södra Blasieholmshamnen 8; 0046-8-679 3500, grandhotel.se**BUSINESS****NOBIS HOTEL**

In Norrmalm, the commercial centre, where the headquarters and offices of large Swedish and international companies are located

The hotel is set in **two six-storey buildings from the 19th century**. In 1973, on the first floor of one of the buildings – a bank at the time – a hostage situation took place, leading to the coining of the term "Stockholm syndrome"

Businessmen who appreciate design and choose to stay on for the weekend to explore the city

Inspired by Stockholm's winter season, the architect studio **Claesson Koivisto Rune designed the 201 rooms**



Chef Isabella Morrone runs the Caina restaurant, with dishes like classic beef carpaccio and buffalo mozzarella. In The Bistro, traditional fare like **eggplant parmesan and caprese salad** are served

Stucco ceilings in the Nobis Suite. Even better are the **cocktails by Robert Radovic at the Gold Bar**

The **small dimensions of single rooms** – just 15sqm

FreeDoubles from **AED 1,280**Norrmalmstorg 2-4; 0046-8-614 1000, nobishotel.se**STYLISH****HOTEL SKEPPSHOLMEN**

On the museum island of Skeppsholmen, near the 20th-century art museum Moderna Museet



In the 17th century, this building housed navy barracks. On the neighbouring **island of Kastellholmen, a pavilion from 1882** belonging to the hotel plays host to gala dinners and conferences

Seekers of solitude: there is barely a soul on the island of Skeppsholmen in the evenings

There are 81 rooms with wooden floors and shutters, a classic example of Swedish minimalism. **Bright divans and chairs add a pop of colour**



Långa Raden specialises in seafood. Try the shrimp salad or the shellfish soup.

Orla Kiely cosmetics are provided in the bathrooms; the light installations in the corridors look like works of modern art

Some rooms are very small and **it can get noisy due to the lobby bar**

FreeDoubles from **AED 1,615**Gröna Gången 1, Skeppsholmen; 0046-8-407 2300, hotelskeppsholmen.se

TRAVELLER PROMOTION



The pool terrace of the Beach Villa offers views of the ocean



Authentic local décor in the spacious Garden Suite

Situated on the serene shores of Seychelles' main island, Mahé, The H Resort Beau Vallon Beach is now open, overlooking a natural lagoon surrounded by the aquamarine hues of the Indian Ocean. The tropical retreat offers guests a selection of handcrafted beachfront villas and garden-view suites designed with authentic Seychellois décor.

An array of cuisines are on offer at distinctive dining venues such as Vasco's, 1502, Ripples, Eden, Seyshima and the hotel's signature Tête-à-Tête, where guests can enjoy a romantic, candlelit, tailor-made dinner on the virgin shores of the island. Additional leisure facilities include a gym, yoga, tennis and the Kid's Club.

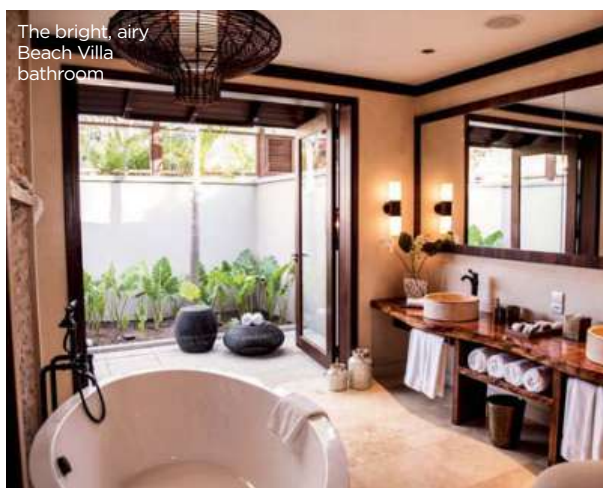
At the centre of the resort lies the Sesel Spa, established by spa director Steve Harvey, a holistic healing expert. The spa offers guests authentic Seychellois treatments to balance the senses with talented local and international therapists combining Eastern and Western techniques utilising a wonderful range of products – Nourished by Nature Abundantly Seychelles, Kerstin Florian and Ila. Made from only the finest natural and organic ingredients, herbal extracts and essential oils, these products cleanse, protect and rejuvenate the body.

Specifically tailored for discerning travellers, The H Resort Beau Vallon Beach provides guests with the ultimate relaxing experience.

For more information call 00248-438 7000 or visit seychelles.h-hotel.com

Pristine PARADISE

Experience holistic healing at
The H Resort Beau Vallon Beach
in the Seychelles



The bright, airy Beach Villa bathroom

The debate



Would you spend your time off in a silent retreat?



YES

PADMA CORAM

Founder & director of Padma Coram - Lifestyle and Wellness

"I used to work in the glamorous and lively entertainment industry and I never switched off, day or night, until I had a devastating physical manifestation of stress that almost put me in a wheelchair. That was my turning point, and a forced private retreat is the best thing I've ever done. Although having my phone taken away and having limited contact with other people was challenging and emotional at first, a moment came when my breathing eased, my backache from the meditation disappeared and I felt an overwhelming sense of joy and self-confidence emanating from within. Spending time with yourself in silence helps you see things more clearly and become calmer. Every year now, I take a month off to go on a private inner retreat and I come back more focused, able to do things faster and with greater accuracy having taken a break from the distractions of technology and the stresses of daily life. Meditation is the single most powerful thing I do: Since changing careers to specialise in meditation techniques for busy corporate individuals, my world is lighter and yet more meaningful."



NO

MAZEN EL ZEIN

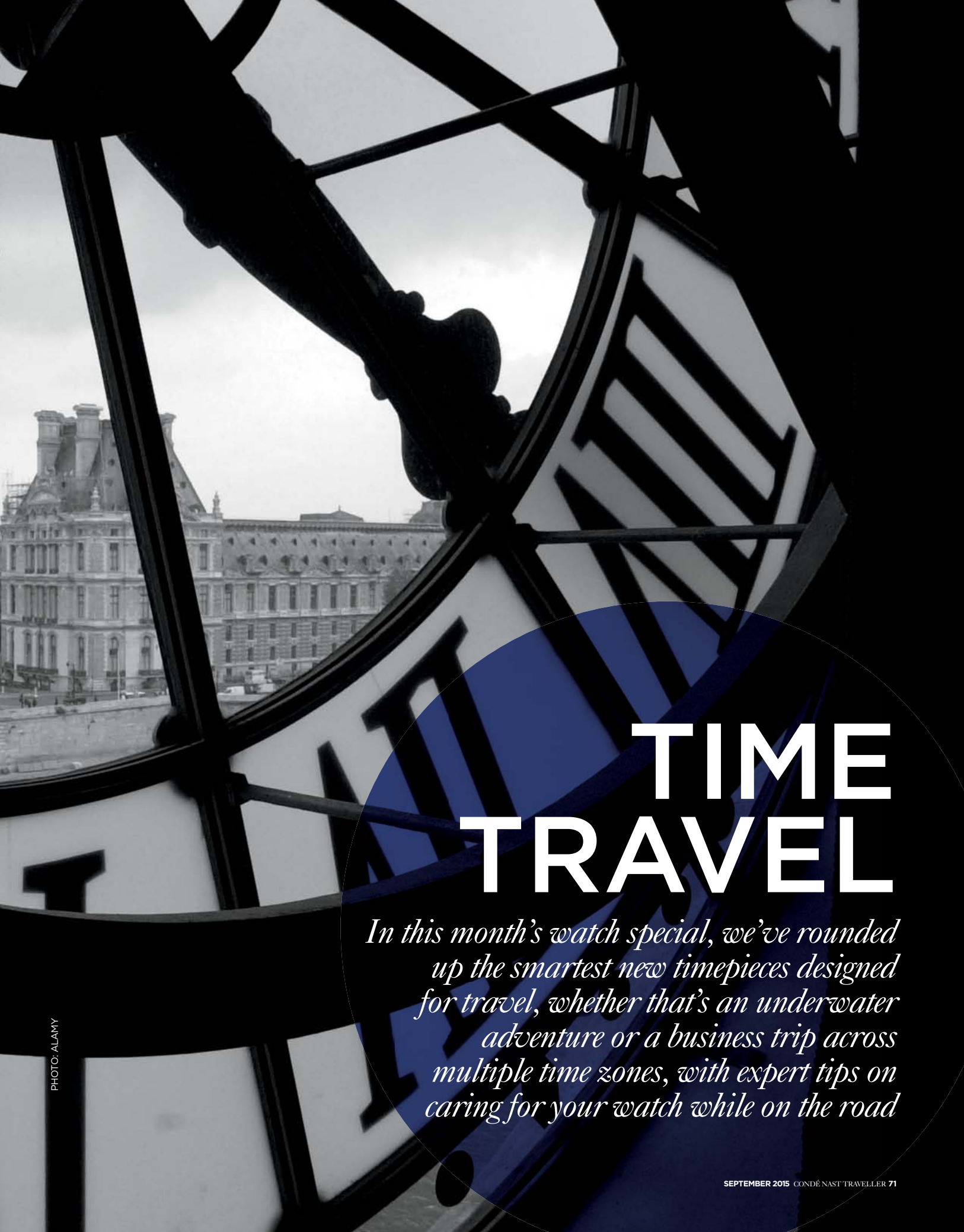
CEO of The Crystal Group

"While I cherish moments of silence, I just don't think it would be possible for me over a prolonged period. On a business level, particularly in recent years, I've found that I always have to stay connected. Since opening Em Sherif and Eden Beach Club in Dubai this year, there's always something that needs my attention. I like to be on top of everything, so if I were disconnected from my teams and the outside world I would probably start to panic. When I travel I like to be sociable, dining and partying with friends and enjoying good conversation, so I would find sitting by myself in absolute silence with no interaction very agitating and it's certainly not how I would choose to spend my time off. I'm also passionate about reading and love music, so a silent retreat where any kind of mental distraction isn't allowed would be a big loss for me. I would crave intellectual stimulation. My biggest issue, however, would be the lack of productivity. I need to stay on top of the news and latest developments in my industry on a daily basis to stay a step ahead of the curve."

Condé Nast
Traveller
MIDDLE EAST

Travel in style

STYLE GUIDE ■ HOW TO PACK ■ HALLE BERRY



TIME TRAVEL

In this month's watch special, we've rounded up the smartest new timepieces designed for travel, whether that's an underwater adventure or a business trip across multiple time zones, with expert tips on caring for your watch while on the road

ON THE MOVE

Watch experts *BEN CLYMER* and *JIN CHENG* pick *new* timepieces that are perfect for your travels

Illustrations by **XIE ZHEN**



JEANRICHARD TERRASCOPE GMT

Equipped with a small GMT complication, the blue outline distinguishes the indicator from the local time hand, allowing the wearer to keep track of two time zones at a glance. Ideal for those who want a snug fit with an elegant design, the watch also comes with the option of a blue, grey or classic black face.

Ben: "When JEANRICHARD makes a timepiece, it makes it well and this one is testament to that. The watch is fitted with a sophisticated movement and comes in a range of different straps."

Harry Winston AVENUE DUAL TIME AUTOMATIC

This playful dual-time watch has two faces, giving it a distinctive character. The home time zone is offset to the right, with two hands close to the movement, while the transparent face reveals the mechanism below. On the left, the local time is displayed through vertical windows as the red hand moves past. The lightweight, durable Zalium used in the watch was exclusively developed by Harry Winston.

Jin: "The casing is big enough to fit two clock faces, with room to spare. The local time is on the left, while the home time is visible on the right side, striking a clear contrast."



Carl F. Bucherer PATRAVI TRAVELTEC II

The TravelTec II, launched to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Patravi series, can display three time zones at once: the first is indicated with the hour and minute hand and applied indices; the second zone on the 24-hour scale printed on the inner ring; and the third on the 24-hour engraved bezel. The monopusher at 10 o'clock features a push-button for changing the hour indications. On the back of the case, the sun logo represents the 24 main city-based time zones.

Jin: "The brand has been working on this three-time-zone model for a while and the complications have advanced with time, setting a high standard both externally and internally. It would be even better if the three time zones were more clearly distinguished."



Patek Philippe CALATRAVA PILOT TRAVEL TIME

The face of this masculine watch is notable for its luxurious navy lacquer, reminiscent of the body paint of American fighter planes from the Thirties, with large applied numerals in white gold. The broad baton-style steel hands are coated with Super-LumiNova glow-in-the-dark pigment so the local time is clearly legible, both in the day and at night. The watch includes the Patek Philippe dual time zone feature, with the skeletonised hour hand indicating the home time discreetly in the background.

Ben: "This was one of the most hotly discussed watches at the Baselworld watch fair. Although people have conflicting views on its appearance, collectors are keen to get their hands on this extraordinary pilot watch."



Bell & Ross BR 03-94 RAFALE

Inspired by the Rafale fighter plane, the black ceramic watch case is a reference to the anti-reflective tints of instrument panels in aeroplane cockpits. The Rafale's characteristic camouflage grey adorns the dial, while the hands have bright orange tips (the colour used in the aviation industry for essential features like flight recorders) to ensure excellent readability. The finishing detail is the small second sub-counter beside three o'clock, at the centre of which is a distinctive silhouette of the fighter aircraft.

Jin: "Bell & Ross never compromises. The brand refuses to abandon aviation casing and has pushed it even further. Following on from the Dassault Falcon family of business jets, which inspired its previous watch, it has adopted the energising grey colour of the Rafale fighter, ensuring a smooth ride after turbulence."



Breitling CHRONOLINER CAPTAIN'S WATCH

The inspiration for this watch comes from Breitling's very own model from the Fifties and Sixties. The black bezel is made from high-tech, scratch-resistant ceramic material, and its star-shaped cut-out design makes it easier to operate. The white-lined ceramic numbers against the black of the bezel, which can rotate in both directions to allow you to set another time zone, makes reading the 24-hour second time easy. The back of the case features two planes in flight, which has been Breitling's logo for many years.

Ben: "Breitling is said to be the king of pilot watches and it's hard to imagine it being outdone by a competitor."



Laco THE BELL X-1

The anti-reflective black surface of this Laco watch is based on cockpit instruments of the Bell X-1 and features numerals and three hands coated with fluorescent material. The modern pilot watch commemorates retired brigadier general Chuck Yeager, who broke the sound barrier at an altitude of 13,700m on a test flight of the rocket-powered Bell X-1.

Ben: "In the Forties, Laco's products were considered top-notch. The company made watches for the German air force along with IWC and Glashütte. This piece features a Miyota movement and a PVD case." ▶



Longines

THE LONGINES HERITAGE DIVER 1967

This timepiece is inspired by an original 1967 diver watch with a unique black opaline dial and silver-hued counters. The graduated bordeaux diving bezel and the tachymeter lend it an elegance. On the back is an illustration of a diver, a nod to the original Longines diver watch.

Jin: "Longines Heritage watches have performed excellently in recent years. The remake has been successful in its loyalty to the company's origins – the 1967 style has been carried out to perfection. The bordeaux outer bezel is eye-catching and the steel bezel captures the spirit of the Sixties, while bordering on Seventies minimalism."

Oris

DIVERS SIXTY-FIVE

This watch has the vintage feel of the original Sixties' model, but incorporates 21st-century craftsmanship. The watch case, made of corrosion-resistant stainless steel with a radius of 40mm, is more contemporary. There's retro domed sapphire glass, while inside a non-reflective coating reduces glare and improves readability underwater. Another upgrade is the unidirectional bezel, with a black aluminium inlay with 60-minute timer. The hands and indices are coated in Super-LumiNova photoluminescent pigment, making it a charming fusion of retro and modern.

Ben: "This pretty and compact watch harks back to a simpler era. At the same time, it's an outstanding diving watch that makes us excited about Oris."



Carl F. Bucherer

PATRAVI SCUBATEC

With a sleek, luxurious rose gold case, this diver's watch has a whole new charm. The two-tone ceramic inlays on its rose gold unidirectional bezel work well together; the black fish-scale face is shiny, symbolising the ripples of light on the surface of the ocean. The titanium watch back is engraved with two manta rays – the logo of the Manta Trust, with which Carl F. Bucherer has partnered to research and protect these marine animals.

Jin: "It was only last year that Bucherer first came out with the ScubaTec. Following on from the stainless steel model, the pure rose gold version comes with a dual-tone strap, and although the watch face is black instead of blue, a streak of blue is preserved on the first 15 minutes of the bezel."





Blancpain THE OCEAN COMMITMENT BATHYSCAPHE CHRONOGRAPHE FLYBACK

Part of the new limited-edition collection, the blue face of this Bathyscaphe watch features three subdials for the chronograph counters and small seconds display. The watch is also equipped with sealed chronograph pushers that allow for its use underwater (it's water-resistant to a depth of 300m) and the flyback function is useful for divers' decompression stops. Limited to 250 pieces.

Jin: "As the first limited-edition of the series, with completely new complications, an association with ocean conservation and the unique blue colour of the Fifty Fathoms series, this watch shows that Blancpain has taken a long, hard look at its creative direction. While respecting tradition, it also embodies an original sporty aesthetic."



Tudor PELAGOS

This year, this classic watch has been equipped with the company's own MT5612 movement and is the first Tudor watch to get Contrôle Officiel Suisse des Chronomètres (COSC) certification. Alongside the technological innovation, this model is available in matte blue (there's also a matte black model), which was the traditional colour of the brand's diving watches in the Sixties. It's also the hue of the Tudor Submariner watch assigned to sailors of the French Navy. Water-resistant to a depth of 500m, it's equipped with a helium escape valve.

Ben: "This watch, made of titanium, has the appearance of a Tudor classic, as well as the brand's identifiable movements."



Breitling SUPEROCEAN II

The all-new Superocean series watch has been slimmed down. Readability of the large numerals on the fluted, rubber-moulded unidirectional rotating bezel is excellent and there is a countdown function suited for the last 15 dive-time minutes and a triangle with a luminescent marker at 12 o'clock. Visibility of the large numerals on the face are enhanced by a white luminescent coating. The oversized hands glow in the dark, making it easier to read underwater. There's a choice of a 44mm- or 42mm-diameter model, which come in both blue and black.

Ben: "We don't normally associate Breitling with diving watches. But this is sure to change with the launch of this outstanding watch." **CNT**

Set SAIL

The gateway to Southeast Asia, Singapore is a haven for shopping, culture, food and festivals, making it the ideal place to begin and end a cruise holiday

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Take a dip in the pool aboard the Sapphire Princess cruise ship

WATCH 9||

WASSIM HADDAD, head of the Haute Horlogerie department at Al Manara International Jewellery, on how to travel with your timepiece



What should I consider before taking my watch into the sea and how should I care for it after?

First, it's important to make sure the watch is waterproof before exposing it to sea or pool water. If it's not, avoid water exposure

so as not to damage it. Second, check that the crown (the small tool that allows you to adjust the functions) is in its closed, natural position. This will prevent any water leaking into the movement of the watch. If your watch has a leather strap, water exposure can cause stains and permanent damage. After a swim with a suitable watch, rinse it thoroughly with fresh water to wash off any saltwater residue.

What should I know about diving while wearing a watch?

The maximum depth that a watch can withstand is usually mentioned on the dial or on the back case. However, it's always useful to read the instruction manual, which provides detailed information about the water-resistance of your watch. There are a few handy functions that you should look for if you intend to dive, such as the unidirectional bezel which helps measure your diving time. Watches that feature Super-LumiNova (or glow-in-the-dark, as it's commonly known) on the hands and numerals are great, enabling you to better read the time in deeper waters.

What kinds of straps work best for a) a beach vacation and b) a hiking expedition?

While on the beach or hiking, your watch will be exposed to water either through moisture in the atmosphere or sweat. The

Opt for a diving watch with a unidirectional bezel and glow-in-the-dark hands and numerals

best straps in such conditions are steel bracelets or natural rubber since these are the most durable against wear. Leather, while durable in everyday environments, can easily get tarnished when exposed to the sun for prolonged periods. Similarly, dampness during hiking expeditions can also cause staining and discolouring, so it's not the best material in such environments.

I'm going skiing and I've never worn my watch in below-freezing temperatures. Should I worry?

There shouldn't be any problem skiing with your watch, since a wrist watch will be kept warm by your body. Plus, you'll likely be wearing gloves and a jacket, which will also keep your watch warm and protected from the atmosphere. Generally, oil used in a good-quality watch movement operates perfectly well at zero degrees, so wearing the watch on your wrist while skiing shouldn't affect the operations of the watch.

Is it true that the airport security scanner can magnetise my watch?

A watch is magnetised when exposed to magnetic fields that can affect some of the

mechanical parts of the watch movement, changing the form and eventually changing the function and accuracy. This is what used to happen with old airport security scanners, which caused watches to start malfunctioning by gaining or losing time each day. The new security scanners in airports no longer affect watches, so it is perfectly safe to pass through them.

What are the watch functions best suited for someone who travels frequently?

In my opinion, the most useful function for frequent travellers is the GMT, which stands for Greenwich Mean Time. This is the "0" point on the 24-hour scale of international time zones, and from there other zones are plus (+) or minus (-) GMT. When included on a watch, this feature enables you to have two different time zones at once – one for your home time and one for the local time. Some watches are also equipped with a day & night indicator which helps differentiate the AM and PM in each time zone. You can also find watches with a "world time" function, enabling you to read the time in all 24 zones of the world at once. [CMT](#)



Sophisticated SANCTUARY

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The spacious balcony of the Knightsbridge Penthouse Suite overlooks Hyde Park



The sleek study of the Grosvenor Penthouse Suite



Contemporary interiors in one of the three-bedroom City Suites

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The luxurious three- and four-bedroom London Suites – Serpentine, City, Westminster and Hyde Park – are named after the iconic landmarks

they overlook. Incorporating open-plan living, dining and a fully-fitted kitchen, each suite features a contemporary, sleek design in dark grey and orange hues.

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For more information call 0044-20-7518 4444 or visit jumeirah.com

ZONED IN

An innovative new travel watch could be the busy globetrotter's perfect match, says RHEA SARAN

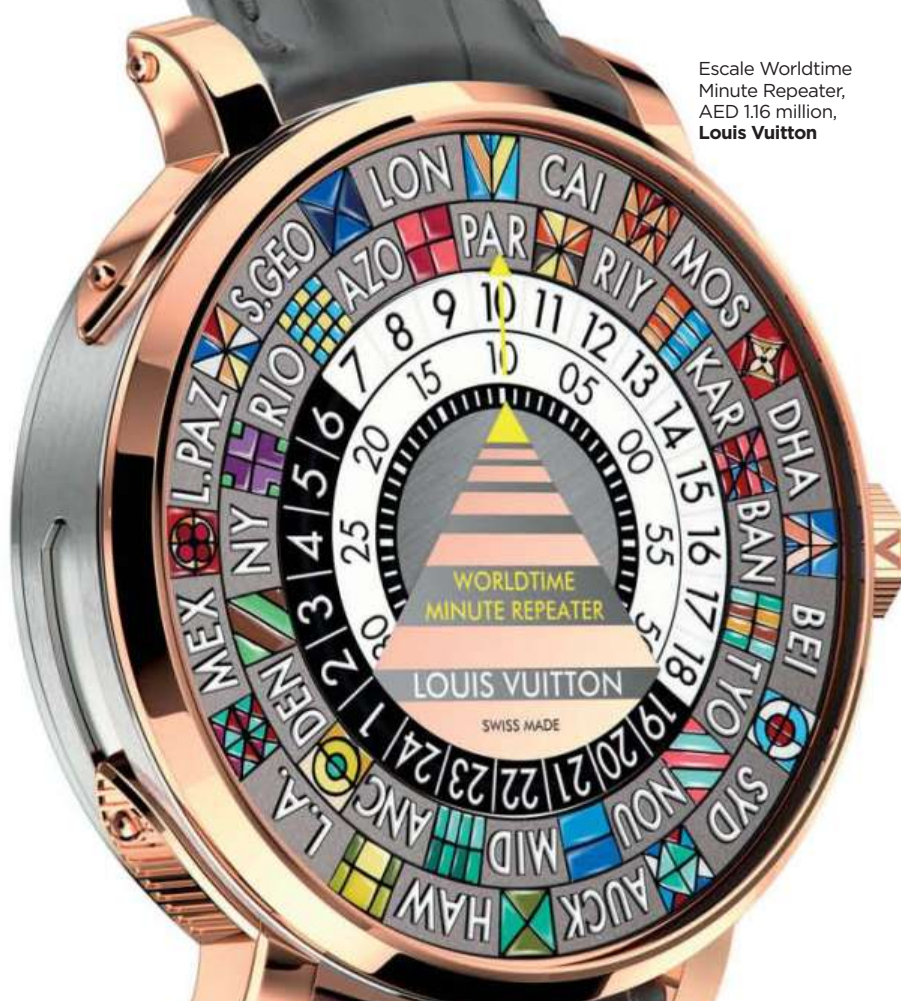


A craftsman at work.
Below: The face features
miniature oil paintings

There are travel watches and then there are travel watches. The Escale Worldtime Minute Repeater, unveiled at Baselworld this year, is definitely the latter, a timepiece worthy of intrepid explorers in the mould of Phileas Fogg. Combining the heft of Louis Vuitton's travel heritage with the innovation and craftsmanship of the watchmakers at La Fabrique du Temps Louis Vuitton – the maison's Swiss manufacture – this timepiece has been dreamt up with the most frequent of flyers in mind. In an industry first, two distinct complications have been combined: the minute repeater – which in a twist on the normal function chimes the wearer's home time, no matter where in the world they are – and the world time feature, which displays not just two time zones but all 24, at a glance and without the use of watch hands. You set your base time using the crown – this city is indicated by the yellow arrow at 12 o'clock – and thanks to three discs that make up the watch face, the relative time in the other 23 time zones is then laid out for easy reference. Sitting in a boardroom in Tokyo but want to check in on the home office in Dubai? A quick flick of the wrist and you'll know if your colleagues are still making their way down Sheikh Zayed Road or settled in their desk chairs.

But this is Louis Vuitton, so it's not just about pleasing the horological geek inside you. The colourful watch face is the result of 40 hours of work put in by craftsmen at the manufacture, who use the technique of miniature oil painting to create what is essentially a portable work of art. Framing this picture is a pink-gold bezel, with pink-gold crown and horns; the horn at 8 o'clock segues into a bolt mechanism by which you can activate the minute repeater function, sounding a little gong for your home time, a chime made clearer by the titanium middle of the case. Harking back to the brand's travel legacy, the case holding together all this art and the movement could be viewed, in a sense, as a trunk of sorts – albeit perhaps a sleeker one than ever before. [CNET](#)

Escale Worldtime
Minute Repeater,
AED 1.16 million,
Louis Vuitton





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4



- 1 Belgrave Textured-Leather Billfold Wallet, AED 1,205, **dunhill**
 2 Jet Set Travel Saffiano Leather Continental Wallet, AED 730, **Michael Kors**
 3 Textured-Leather Billfold Wallet, AED 1,390, **Loewe**
 4 Monogram Saint Laurent Zip Around Wallet, AED 3,000, **Saint Laurent by Hedi Slimane**
 5 Nero Ostrich Wallet, AED 3,750, **Bottega Veneta**
 6 Classic Metallic Edge Continental Zip Around wallet, AED 1,950, **Balenciaga**
 7 Microguccissima Leather Bi-fold Wallet, AED 1,300, **Gucci**
 8 Textured-leather Continental Wallet, AED 1,850, **Miu Miu** at net-a-porter.com

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 2 Dress, AED 3,185, **Proenza Schouler** at net-a-porter.com
 3 Classic Small Monogram Tassel Satchel, AED 8,800, **Saint Laurent by Hedi Slimane**
 4 Emerald drop earrings, AED 1,490, **Ciner** at sophiescloset.com
 5 **Flutterfluff** Mink Lashes, AED 110 at sophiescloset.com
 6 **Benefit** Hoola bronzer, AED 145
 7 Rochelle dress, AED 5,480, **Missoni** at Boutique 1
 8 Tribute sandals, AED 3,700, **Saint Laurent by Hedi Slimane**
 9 **Topas** Multiwheel Trolley, AED 3,795, **Rimowa**
 10 Gabriele jacquard-knit merino wool cape, AED 2,785, **Temperley London** at Symphony

WORDS: JENNY KING; STYLE: SABINA PARKINSON; PHOTO: EFFRAIM EVIDOR



HOT TIP
 When travelling with kids, replace bulky items like storybooks and puzzles with similar apps on a tablet



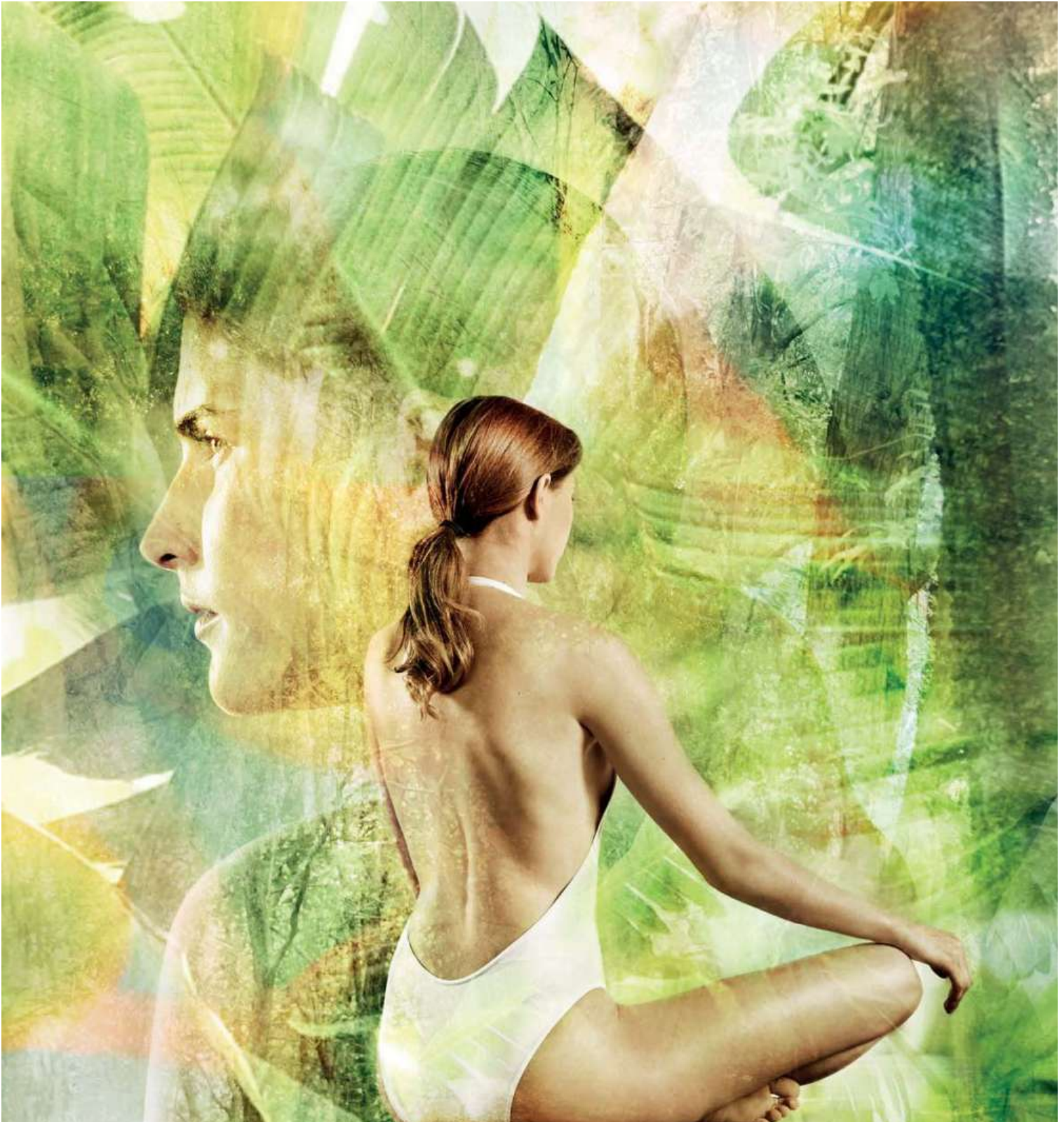
CITY CHIC

Founder of jewellry and accessories website *sophiescloset.com* **SOPHIE KATIRAI** on packing for a family trip to Toronto

When travelling with her three-year-old daughter, Katirai thinks functional but chic. A lightweight chambray dress is a versatile day-to-night option, dressed down with classic black flats while exploring the St Lawrence Market, Royal Ontario Museum and Marineland at Niagara Falls, or dressed up with comfy strappy sandals in a statement hue come nightfall.

Embellished emerald earrings with detachable drops work for any occasion, as does an elegant cross-body leather satchel. For a more formal dinner at Daisho or Colette Grand Café, she ups the glam factor with lashes and a sweep of bronzer, and a stylish graphic cape over a black cocktail dress to keep the autumn chill at bay.

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TAKE COMFORT

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to your travel kit with
socks that keep you
warm and on trend*

CNT
Classic

Higgle-striped
cotton-blend
socks, AED 100,
Paul Smith

It's not just shoes that make the man. Sure, being well shod is a must, but it's your socks that allow for a flash of personality, a hint of colour, a dash of humour – no matter the situation. And few people combine elegance with whimsy quite as effectively as Sir Paul Smith. These multi-tone, striped cotton-blend socks from the playful British designer aren't just fun – they'll dress up a monotone ensemble in seconds – they're also practical. So you can ditch the beige, one-size-fits-all foot warmers on board your next flight, and stay both stylish and comfortable in a vibrant pair that meet your feet's needs.



1

2

Safe haven

There are occasions – and places – that demand you break out your finest rocks. Just don't forget the combination...

JEWELLERY

- 1 Tiffany Novo square-cut diamond solitaire ring, 4.13k, **Tiffany & Co.**
- 2 High Jewellery necklace in platinum and brilliant-cut diamonds, **Cartier**
- 3 White diamond Rhythm earrings, **Graff**
- 4 L'Heure du Diamant watch in white gold, 30.45k, **Chopard**
- 5 Diva bracelet in 18k white gold with full pavé diamonds, **Bulgari**

WORDS: RHEA SARÁN; STYLE: VIBHA DANIA-DHAWAN; PHOTO: EFRAM EVIDOR; ALL PRICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



- 1 **Estée Lauder** Clear Difference Purifying Exfoliating Mask, AED 235
- 2 **Nuxe** Crème Fraîche de Beauté 24hr Soothing and Rehydrating Fresh Mask, AED 109
- 3 **Sisley** Creamy Mask With Tropical Resins, AED 465
- 4 **Guerlain** Abeille Royale Repairing Honey Gel Mask, AED 650
- 5 **Kiehl's** Ultra Facial Overnight Hydrating Masque, AED 314
- 6 **Clarins** Beauty Flash Balm, AED 218
- 7 **Clinique** Pore Refining Solutions Charcoal Mask, AED 190



5



6



7

Face TIME

Air travel and changing climates can wreak havoc on your skin. Take a time-out to rehydrate and nourish with face masks that replace the glow without cramping your globetrotting style



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Red-carpet ready

*Oscar winner HALLE BERRY, star of sci-fi series *Extant*, on holiday indulgences and where to get the best facial*

What's your biggest holiday indulgence?

A nice glass of red grape.

What is your pre-flight beauty routine?

I like to start a flight fresh, with no make-up on at all. If for any reason I'm rushing to catch a plane from a work event, I always make sure my skincare products are in my handbag. Then the first thing I do when they take the fasten-your-seatbelt sign off is run into the bathroom.

Do you do anything extra to get your body beach-ready?

I like to stay fit all year round, largely because I'm diabetic and staying healthy is part of managing that. I'm not obsessed with it, but I exercise around three times a week, sometimes more. I do a lot of cardio to get my heart pumping, and light weights.

Does your regime change if you're getting ready for a red-carpet event?

Chanel Sublimage Eye Cream works as a fantastic base moisturiser under the rest of my make-up, and helps keep skin really hydrated.

What's your favourite spa?

I swear by Olga Lorencin-Northrup at the Kinara Skincare Clinic & Spa in Los Angeles – her facials are truly amazing. And the Red Carpet Facial Kit works wonders if I'm away from home. If I travel somewhere and I haven't got it with me, I get straight on the phone to have it sent out to me – I can't live without it.

How do you protect your hair in the sun?

Mixed Chicks make really great products for women with curly hair – I don't use anything else. When I want to keep my hair wavy I use the leave-in conditioner; to wear it straight I just wash it out with the regular conditioner.



Chanel Sublimage Eye Essential Regenerating Eye Cream, AED 830

Revlon ColorStay Gel Envy Nail Enamel, AED 40



Kinara Purifying Cleansing Gel, AED 155

Have you discovered

any great beauty brands on your travels?

I think that women always look better, no matter what age they are, when their skin is a little dewy and not too powdery. So after I've done my make-up, I spray my face with Australian brand Jurlique's Rosewater Balancing Mist and let that sink in. Even if I don't have any make-up on, it's really refreshing. It makes my skin glow.

Do you have a particular nail colour you wear on holiday?

I sometimes get manicures if I'm going away, but a lot of the time I do my own nails based on what I'm wearing, or for a movie role, so my nail colour is always changing. For a simple natural look, I like Revlon's All or Nothing.

'After I've done my make-up, I spray my face with a rosewater mist. It's really refreshing and makes my skin glow'

What fragrance do you wear?

One that I actually created myself, called Halle. I thought it would be cheesy but I love it. I got to construct the mix of scents I'd want to wear, so it really is my own creation.

Do you have any tips for keeping up appearances after a long-haul journey?

When I land I like to put on a little base colour: Revlon's ColorStay foundation is great.

Halle Berry is a Revlon Global Brand Ambassador



Recently revitalised
Mount Street has
become a fashion
destination

Jacket, trousers,
handbag, boots;
all by **Dior**

MAYFAIR MODERN

New developments and buzzy openings are bringing a whiff of cool to this corner of London's West End

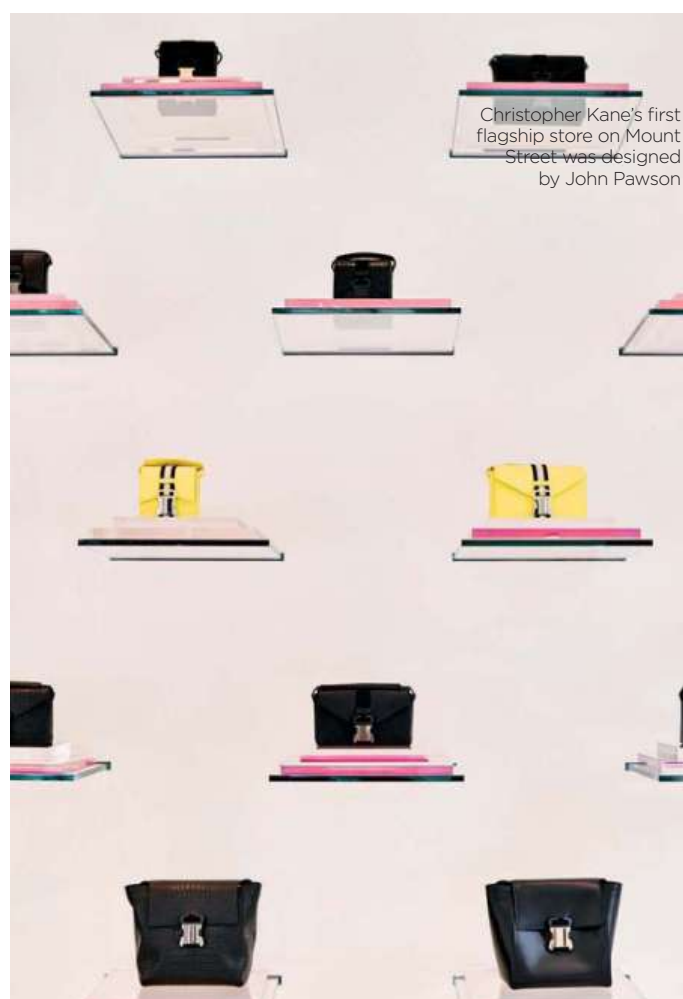
Written by **RHEA SARAN** | Photographed by **OLIVER PILCHER** | Styled by **NAVAZ BATLIWALLA**

TO THE RIGHT AS YOU ENTER THE WHITE-brick-walled, light-wood-floored North Audley Cantine – or NAC, as locals refer to this casual Parisian bistro not far off Oxford Street – are a set of stairs, above which hangs a red neon-lit arrow pointing toward the basement. Follow these directions and you'll end up in a chic yet cosy slice of the Thirties: a speakeasy-style cocktail den – vintage portraits, dim lighting, velvet curtains – with an Asian-French heritage and a distinctly canine theme. Teddy the resident chow chow and local celebrity – he, after all, inspired the name **Chez Chow** (0044-20-7493 3443, naclondon.co.uk) may greet you on arrival with a sniff before returning to his spot by the bar; peek around the corner and you'll see his water bowl against the wall. Cool jazz fills the space as you order a g&t, or perhaps an Aged Old Fashioned, and relax into a large armchair among a hip set happy to pay top dollar for a crafted drink. Yet for all its obvious style, the laid-back vibe is a far cry from the no-phones, no-jeans-allowed members' club bars that have long been coveted in the neighbourhood. Raise a glass to the new Mayfair.

Talk to people who frequent this part of central London and they'll tell you that, of late, there's been a noticeable shift in tone. Places that some would consider stuffy and tired have given way to restaurants, bars, stores and even art galleries that have added something resembling edge to the neighbourhood. Perhaps – as a recent report from Mayfair real-estate agency Wetherell suggests – the change in demographics has something to do with it. Where before Mayfair was populated by those nearing their retirement years, the majority of residents now are under the age of 44. And where they choose to spend their money may not be where their parents once did.

Which could explain why several heavy-hitting restaurateurs have zeroed in on Mayfair for their latest, more pared-back ventures. Rock star Spanish chef David Muñoz, whose ▶





DiverXO in Madrid earned him three Michelin stars, will soon have digs on Old Burlington Street. But it's not his much-awarded signature brand that he's bringing across the pond. Instead, London is getting the first international outpost of the more edgy, playful **StreetXO**. Inspired by street food, artistically presented Asian-inflected tapas and culinary cocktails will be served in – if the Madrid original is anything to go by – an achingly hip space.

Before bowing out late last month, pioneering French chef Inaki Aizpitarte generated much excitement when he chose Mount Street for **Le Chabanais** (0044-20-7491 7078, lechabanaislondon.com), conceived as an offshoot of his Paris restaurant Le Chateaubriand. The chef best known for popularising “bistronomy” – where the food is top-notch but the vibe casual – created a menu heavy on comforting dishes like Basque squid stew and veal sweetbreads with green beans and fresh almonds, all served in an unfussy space of brass-lined walls and marbled communal bar seating. Also launched this summer: former Nobu director Kurt Zdesar's **Bouillabaisse** (0044-20-3794 8448, bouillabaisse.co.uk). Specialising in coastal cuisine and grape,

the restaurant on Mill Street is designed as a hybrid of a seafood shack and a French bistro, where spherical lamps and distressed wood, leather banquettes and fish tanks all jostle for attention. It might be the least shack-like of beach shacks but the menu of approachable classics, like the signature bouillabaisse and whole lobster from the Isle of Skye, highlight the thought behind it.

It's not all food and drink, though. Sharing a wall with Le Chabanais on the new improved **Mount Street**, this February saw the opening of the first-ever Christopher Kane flagship boutique. Housed in an Edwardian edifice more traditional to the locality, the interior is a contrast in sensibility, designed by uber-minimalist British architect John Pawson. The largely off-white, two-level space includes a graphic wall of bags near the entrance and clothes sparsely displayed on racks along the walls. Kane is not the only of-the-moment London Fashion Week designer to have found his home in the area. Also nearby are Roksanda Ilincic, with its strikingly dressed window display, Marc Jacobs and Roland Mouret. Around the corner on **South Audley Street**, French label Balmain set up shop in spring, and Erdem has just opened.

Perhaps even more exciting is the landing of **The New Craftsmen** (0044-20-7148 3190, thenewcraftsmen.com) in this corner of London. On a nondescript stretch of North Row, a block from the retail frenzy of Oxford Street and minutes from Selfridges, is a white-fronted, late-19th-century building once the workshop space of makers of leather breeches. On the ground floor, The New Craftsmen store displays the works of makers and craftspeople from the British Isles, ranging in expertise from textiles to ceramics, jewellery to furniture. More importantly, it serves as a hub where clients can connect with craftspeople to create bespoke pieces for their homes or personal collections. “We feel the home of craft is in the luxury market,” says co-founder Catherine Lock. “The makers we work with are skilled, they're perfectionists, and it takes time to master skills and to reach a level of perfection. You could equate it with what goes into an Hermès bag – it's all about time, dedication and skill.” While the location for a concept like this may be surprising to some, Lock explains that while many small creative companies locate themselves in the East End, where the rents are surely friendlier, that's not where their customer base is: “Customers ▶



North Audley Cantine
brings a casual French
bistro vibe to Mayfair

Top, trousers;
both by **Hermès**



Classic buildings house
of-the-moment brands
on Mount Street

Sweatshirt, trousers;
both by **Versace**.
Boots by **Hermès**

in Mayfair and interior designers, practically speaking, are less likely to go out there.” Fortunately, Grosvenor Estate, which has been leading the revitalisation of the area, made it possible for Lock and her team to set up here, side by side with established brands who, she says, “have the same base values even though we’re doing something different”. The New Craftsmen also organises occasional workshops as well as sit-down meals and discussions on the nature of craft and luxury.

On Berkley Square, meanwhile, looms the shiny new headquarters of Phillips’ auction house. Dramatic installations in the glass windows along street level draw the eye. It would appear that a similar, and very practical, desire to be where the buyers are has also led to Mayfair turning into something of an art hub, with both big auction houses and smaller galleries sprouting up over the past few years. Just off Hanover Square, **Hus Gallery** (0044-20-7495 0700, husgalleries.com) is a compact exhibition space with polished concrete floors, hosting solo and group contemporary art shows. This might include the works of a Lisbon-born artist whose paintings depict historical portraits with the faces blanked out in a bid to get us to reexamine our attitudes toward historic representations.

Contemporary – both in art and design – is the newly refurbished **London Marriott Hotel Park Lane** (doubles from AED 1,950; 0044-20-7493 7000, marriott.com), right by Marble Arch. Situated in a period building, complete with Georgian-style lamps on the outside, the boutique-sized hotel reopened this summer with interiors that more accurately reflect the evolving nature of the neighbourhood. While adding more suites to its portfolio, the hotel took the décor from classic and traditional to sleek and modern, with dove grey and lavender tones in the guestrooms and marble-and-glass bathrooms that winningly bridge the gap between form and function. Downstairs with Park Lane-facing window seats (and its own entrance on to the street) is Lanes of London, a cosy eatery with vintage décor – wingback chairs, leather booth seating, brass details and retro tiling – but a modern British menu. Entirely on trend are the seasonal nature of the menu with dishes like new season charred asparagus, chilli, almonds and lemon dressing, and the responsible, local sourcing of ingredients: sustainably caught fish from Cornwall, chicken from the Cotswolds. “Provenance” is a sexy concept these days, and it plays its part here – as it does in stores like The New Craftsmen.

Perhaps then the real change reverberating across the neighbourhood is not so much about youth or tradition but a renewed desire for an authentic experience, no matter what form that might take.



Bull's heart tomatoes, summer purslane and feta salad at L. Chabanaïs

MORE MODERN MAYFAIR

EAT & DRINK

Kitty Fisher's

Award-winning young chef Tomos Parry helms the kitchen of this Shepherd Market eatery that opened in December, housed in a former curry house that now dishes out Spanish-inflected modern British fare like English salt cod croquettes and ox cheek with champ, spring onion and spinach. The décor is intimate, as is the seating, and famous faces including David Beckham and David Cameron have dined here. *Entrées from AED 34; 0044-20-3302 1661, kittyfishers.com*

North Audley Cantine

Conceived by three childhood friends, NAC is a hip French bistro in a warm, rustic space

of whitewashed exposed-brick walls and funky lighting with a covered patio for dining al fresco in good weather. French rap might flow out of the speakers as you order a platter of *fromages et charcuteries* to share, followed by an Asian-inflected seabass tartar or the truffled mac and cheese. It's stylish, buzzy and wholly unpretentious. Chez Chow is just downstairs. *Entrées from AED 23; 0044-20-7493 3443, naclondon.co.uk*

ROKA Mayfair

Opened last year on North Audley Street, ROKA is the casual-chic Japanese *robatayaki* restaurant from the creators of Zuma. Designed by Noriyoshi Muramatsu, the contemporary interiors make use of natural wood and industrial materials, and the restaurant is anchored by the on-display robata grill, which makes for a lively, convivial atmosphere in which to enjoy spiced chicken►

Classic Mayfair
now coexists
with a fresher side

Jumper, skirt, boots;
all by **Louis Vuitton**





Lately, there's been a shift in tone in Mayfair. New restaurants, bars, stores and art galleries have added something resembling edge to the neighbourhood



The London Marriott
Hotel Park Lane recently
reopened after a revamp
that captures some of
Mayfair's new energy

Coat, dress, boots; all by
Alexander McQueen



A practical desire to be where
the buyers are is turning
Mayfair into something of
an art hub, with both big
auction houses and smaller
galleries sprouting up



Hus Gallery off
Hanover Square
showcases the works
of contemporary
artists

Dress, coat,
boots, bag; all
by **Saint Laurent**
by **Hedi Slimane**



Modern details in a premier suite at the London Marriott Hotel Park Lane



Bespoke craftwork at The New Craftsmen

wings with sea salt and lime or a lobster hotpot. *Entrées from AED 29; 0044-20-7305 5644, roka-restaurant.com/roka-mayfair*

Mr Fogg's

Play along at this speakeasy on a small street off Berkeley Square, where you're the guest of *Around The World In Eighty Days* protagonist Phileas Fogg. The bar is his home, full of curiosities picked up on his travels, and the excellent cocktails – a twist on classics – are each accompanied by a short story. The staff are in character, making for a transporting evening (or afternoon, if you book the Tipsy Tea). Just remember to dress the part. *Cocktails from AED 70; 0044-20-7036 0608, mr-foggs.com/residence*

The Whip

Venture past patrons falling out of Mayfair's oldest pub, the Running Horse, and head to the still-equestrian-themed but more relaxed drinking den upstairs, designed for those who truly care what goes into their cocktails. Fans of the julep – the official drink of the Kentucky Derby – will find not just the classic but inventive variations; the menu, part seasonal, has plenty of other creative concoctions, too. Jazz on the decks and sophisticated small plates tie it all together. *Cocktails from AED 57; 0044-20-7493 1275, thewhipmayfair.co.uk*

SHOP

Duke Street

Once, there was not much reason to stop by this stretch of pavement off Oxford Street. But with the landing of a cool concept store as well as several smaller yet stylish retailers, Duke Street is fashioning itself into something of a destination for shoppers. Perhaps the biggest boon to the street was the opening of the **Duke Street Emporium** (0044-20-7042 2770, dukestreetemporium.com), which brings together edits from Jigsaw and Chelsea's The Shop at Bluebird. Housed in a grand 19th-century building (only on the outside; inside it's chic minimalism), in addition to Jigsaw's own line the space is stocked with designers like Maison Kitsune and Stutterheim and jewellery maker Katie Rowland, as well as art books and vintage finds. Shoppers can refuel with an espresso and sourdough toast at the in-store Fernandez & Wells. Also calling Duke Street home with a store that opened last autumn is eclectic bootmaker **Penelope Chilvers** (0044-20-7491 9555, penelopechilvers.com), whose boots are both practical and stylish, having caught on with setters of trends like Alexa Chung. Not far off is **E. Tautz's** first retail store (0044-20-7629 8809, etautz.com) – creative director Patrick Grant, a Savile-Row trained tailor who

revitalised the brand with a ready-to-wear collection in 2009, this year won the British Fashion Council/GQ Designer Menswear Fund. Another top spot for menswear on this stretch is Nick Ashley's **Private White V.C.** (0044-20-7629 9918, privatewhitevc.com), whose military-inspired attire smacks of authentic British heritage but with a contemporary appeal. Using classic milliner techniques for hats with a modern feel is **Laura Apsit Livens**, who graduated from London College of Fashion as recently as 2011 and, having worked with Philip Treacy and collaborated with brands like Louis Vuitton, settled into a quirky atelier on this stretch of Mayfair (0044-20-7493 7067, lauraapsitlivens.co.uk). Occupying a 19sqft listed staircase is **The TukTuk Flower Studio** (0044-20-7493 5813, thetuktuk.net): the name is suggestive of the journey the florist takes shoppers on, with Japanese *ikebana* and techniques from India, Morocco and Egypt being applied to seasonal English wildflower arrangements. **CNT**

Getting there

Virgin Atlantic (virgin-atlantic.com) flies daily from Dubai to London. For more information on the airline's Upper Class services, see page 133



Franco-Asian décor
with a canine theme
at Chez Chow

Top, trousers, belt,
boots; all by **Hermès**

Taste of Burgundy



This French region is Michelin-star heartland.
STEPHEN BAYLEY finds out if it's worth all the fuss

Photographed by **LISA LINDER**



Hostellerie de Levernois.
Opposite: Vanilla and cherry
Paris-Brest at Levernois

“

What we ate was almost beside the point because this is theatre, not dinner. It's about the chef, not about the eater

”



Summer-fruit sponge cake
at Bistrot au Bord de l'Eau,
Hostellerie de Levernois

B

BUR-GUN-DY. The three resonant syllables seem to promise something of the riches this historic and flavoursome *terroir* made famous. Burgundy? A red grape that's become an eponym for luxury. The ever-present memories of good and fearless dukes, their feasts and tournaments, cruelties and flourishes, mistresses and monuments, as well as the great paintings they left behind: Rogier van der Weyden's epic *Last Judgement* in Beaune's L'Hôtel Dieu is a majestic synopsis of wealth and the mortal fear it brings.

To Curnonsky, the Belle-Époque gastronome, Burgundy was the "paradise

of paradises". Certainly, it has some of the prettiest landscape in all France. You find gentle farmland with not much drama of the geological sort: the famous Côte d'Or may be an escarpment, but raw nature has been smoothed by centuries of cultivation and civilisation. Burgundy proves that the two feed off each other.

The agricultural product is Pinot Noir or Chardonnay: two grapes which, fettled and tended and marked-up by leathery-fingered *vignerons* and twinkly-eyed *négociants* and all the other species of go-betweens in the bafflingly complicated Burgundy grape trade, create a universe of experience from the spit-it-out awful to the (rarer) heart-soothing sublime.

Then there are the snails, foie gras, frogs' legs, *jambon persillé*, sweetbreads, chickens and Epoisses cheese which, since Philippe le Bon first pulled on his scratchy woollen tights, have comprised the regional cuisine. I have been coming here since I was a student in a battered Citroën, making regular stops in Beaune en route to friends in the Jura. My trip this time, with my wife, ended in a windy field with Mont Blanc in the distance. Aristocratic Bresse hens – white with blue legs and red

crops, *tricolore* poultry – ranged free and the whiff of farmyard reminded me of John Armit's ineffable advice on grape tasting: good Burgundy should smell of *merde*.

Joigny, especially in the drizzle, fulfils many anticipations. The lonely *nouvelle-vague* girl on the station platform; the bold graphics of the Agence de la Gare (a liaison of Le Corbusier and *Tintin*); the corset-coloured pebbledash of the Bistro de la Gare, with its old hops signs and pitiless strip lighting. I find all of this almost intolerably romantic, but our destination is elsewhere. If Joigny's Bistro de la Gare is a frazzled old madame with bad teeth, Joigny's riverbank **La Côte Saint Jacques** (*entrées from AED 230; doubles from AED 950; 0033-3-8662 0970, cotesaintjacques.com*), is a serene grande dame, immaculately primped and maintained, even if a little bit against nature. Alter a single detail, ask for a change of pace, and you fear the stitches might burst.

La Côte Saint Jacques has had three Michelin stars since 1986 and confidently, even perhaps a little complacently, presents an essentially French version of luxury and food. The Michelin system now has many critics who say it is biased toward France, hostile to innovation, puts a false emphasis on ▶



A sign in Levernois village.
Left: A pretty window at
Hostellerie de Levernois



ludicrous refinements and mistakes complexity for sophistication. Exactly so. This is the point. The Michelin system promotes fuss and contrivance above bestial gratification, and this is why it is magnificent: just like the Académie Française, it arrogantly refuses change and will never succumb to barbarian penetration. It is a thing unto itself, unalterably French.

But before dinner we check into our room, also unalterably French. The theme is brown, quite unnegotiably so. There is strange, geometric-patterned upholstery on a chair with a white-painted bamboo frame.

A tunnel with a mirrored wall and ceiling, like an exciting concept for a Sixties discotheque, leads to a bathroom that's huge with reflected light from the river, but inexplicably uncomfortable.

The restaurant at La Côte Saint Jacques presents privilege, expertise and archaic cultural isolation. It is 7.40pm and the staff are standing tensely around the threshold while the bar's occupants are preparing to disengage from the bubbly and go to dinner. This being three-star France, a party of four at the adjacent table has been discussing niceties of the menu for 20 minutes with the maître d'. The menu offers "A spring walk between earth, sea and forest" for around AED 315. What about one of those Bresse chickens steamed in bubbly, the house signature dish? I am lost in contemplation when, like a manager before a match, Jean-Michel Lorain, the chef, arrives to give customers a pep talk. I wonder if he also does this at half time when we change ends and put on clean shirts. Asking if we need explanation or changes, Lorain, who it turns out has prepared a menu specially for us, is not looking as if he wants to explain or change anything much. He assures us without smiling "I am not *tyrannique*".

Here you begin to experience the complicated wonder of it all, the density of preparation that gives an establishment the three-star status for which, in turn, provincial folk will pay up to AED 1,150 for dinner and not grumble about it. And that's without grape. What we ate is almost beside the point because this is theatre, not dinner. It is about the chef, not about the eater. Anyway: to amuse-our-mouth, a "cappuccino" of lobster with *poireaux* vinaigrette. A five-way deconstruction of oysters. I can happily taste them now. Bass steamed and smoked with caviar (farmed in Aquitaine). My wife said yum. Next, snails with sweet garlic, lentils and morels followed by cubes of veal treated in three ways: *tête de veau*, tongue, fillet. A

“
*I asked Bottiglierio if having
only one Michelin star was
a liberation and a relief
and not the imposition
that three stars bring.
He rather agreed*
”

shockingly delicious and oily Meursault from Olivier Leflaive.

Next morning we drive south to Chablis where a genial rogue in a seven-seater minivan meets us up an alleyway for a vineyard tour. A mere 5,200 hectares provide the planet's benchmark for flinty white grape: from the heights scaled by the van you appreciate the artifice. Gas tanks heat the vineyards while helicopters spray. The rogue gets a tripod stool from the back of the Nissan and, in a cutting wind, opens a bottle of Petit Chablis, nicely described as a "*pétanque* grape". We taste, we spit and we carry on to Dijon for lunch.

IN MY BATTLING CITROËN DAYS, DIJON WAS a busy, engaging town, but doctrinaire pedestrianisation has made it less dangerous, therefore more antiseptic. International clothes shops have replaced mad traffic and something characterful has been lost. Our destination is **Loiseau des Ducs** (*entrées from AED 90; 0033-3-8030 2809, bernard-loiseau.com*), off the vast and chilly Place de la Libération, just in front of the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon where once the dukes of Burgundy made sport.

It was the suicide of Burgundy's Bernard Loiseau in 2003 that made people question the integrity and sense of the Michelin star system: his Saulieu restaurant retained its three stars even after the gun had done its sombre work. But it was, they said, the pressures of the rating system that had, in any case, driven him to the bottle and then the trigger.

Loiseau des Ducs is La Veuve Loiseau's latest brand extension, a sort of gastromemorial following the signature pinafores. Its menu features the presiding spirit's classics: *jambonnettes* (frogs' legs) and a fist-sized *ris de veau* with a positively ducal excess of truffled

mash. My wife said, "What's that green thing you've just put your hand in?" as we looked bemused at uninvited kitchen gifts, including a beetroot velouté with cinnamon foam. Like all art forms, there is a skill-talent-genius triarchy in cooking. Here, we felt, was only skill. Perhaps that is what one star means.

One of the pleasures of the *Michelin Guide Rouge* is its precise symbology: besides the stars, there are knives and forks, diving boards and ironing boards to indicate a hotel's attractions and assets. When we arrived at the **Abbaye de la Bussière** (*entrées from AED 140; doubles from AED 1,180;*

0033-3-8049 0229, abbaye-de-la-bussiere.com), I wondered if little silhouettes of expensive cars might be included as well. Until recently it was a run-down religious institution with plastic stacking chairs and furtive monks; there were two Swiss-registered Aston Martins in the car park when our rental Renault pulled up.

This is a wonderful place: English owner Clive Cummings has reconciled Viollet-le-Duc's theory of Gothic restoration with country-house-hotel practice. Our bedroom was like sleeping in Philippe le Bon's junk room, all tapestries and drapes. I liked the ex-Legionnaire gofer, Robert, who, I felt certain, could strangle a critic while manhandling six pigskin bags from the boot of an Aston with his other hand. In nave-like spaces and on the primed lawn there are Paul Day sculptures; I drank an exceptionally delicious Mâcon-Vergisson with a stained-glass window as a backdrop while waiting for my wife and dinner.

At the top of Emmanuel Hébrard's menu there is a rubric about gastronomy's relationship with nutrition and happiness sourced from Oxford's chair of Francophilia, Theodore Zeldin. A waiter appeared. I thought he was offering "road sauce" with yet more frogs' legs, but I had misheard "root" and a celeriac purée was in mind. This was good. We drank Rully La Perche from the Domaine Belleville and I felt Burgundian. Pleasantly before, and necessarily after dinner, you can ride bikes along the beautiful and hauntingly empty Canal de Bourgogne. There are owls.

Further south, just outside Beaune at Levernois, we saw three helicopters on the lawn at the **Hostellerie de Levernois** (*entrées from AED 280; doubles from AED 950; 0033-3-8024 7358, levernois.com*), suggesting another possible addition to Michelin's symbology. That and those square parasols signifying hotel hipness. Jean Louis Bottiglierio's compound ▶



Lobster and endive risotto carbonara at La Côte Saint Jacques. **Left:** The restaurant's snails, girolles, chanterelles and garlic custard



Acquerello risotto with frog's legs and snails at Levernois. **Right:** A dish titled "Anatomy of a Fish on Oyster Theme" at La Côte Saint Jacques



of bistro, restaurant and hotel was the most modern we found in Burgundy, but in a good way. We ate a perfect *jambon persillé*, a tartare of tomatoes with raw langoustines and escargots with garlic that had been cooked six times to reduce strength while retaining flavour. *Oeufs en meurette* with a white (instead of trad red) grape reduction was very clever. I asked Bottiglieri if having only one Michelin star was a liberation and a relief and not the imposition that three stars bring. He rather agreed. Guests milled pleasantly between the terrace and the choppers while we dozed in the hull of a boat watching gnats in the river's sunshine.

In the celebrated **Maison Lameloise** (*entrées from AED 310; doubles from AED 700; 0033-3-8587 6565, lameloise.fr*) at Chagny is another of France's three stars. A copy of Curnonsky in the bar ("*la cuisine, c'est quand les choses ont le gout de ce qu'elles sont*") was promising while escargot popcorn indicated ambition, if not *bon goût*. I stared at the menu. Langoustines came with "*riz croustillant*" which seemed to mean Rice Krispies. At the next table an American couple was insisting in a spelling-it-out way: "Tomorrow. I. Want. Meat. Cheese. And. Red. Grape." The bedrooms reminded me of a

hotel in St. Albans I stayed in when I was 10. At breakfast, the orange juice was packaged. I spoke to some English cooks about this and they said such a transgression merited a Dreyfus-like breaking of the chef's sword and public shaming. So here it is.

We drove to a final night at the **Château de Besseuil** (*entrées from AED 155; doubles from AED 555; 0033-3-8536 9249, chateaubesseuil.com*), a grape estate outside Mâcon, nicely re-worked into *agritourisme* by Swiss architect André Meillard. It was calm and beautiful. We lolled in the vineyard in strong sunshine, but, alas, French employment laws make it impossible for a rural establishment to run a credible restaurant of the Château's ambitions. Tired stuff was rolled out at breakfast. We clucked and then drove on to the chickens in their field south of Dole.

What does it say of France that Bresse chickens live better than Sarko's *racaille* with 10sqm each, good diets and flocks restricted to 500 birds? What does it say of France that their melting flesh marbled with fat is much admired in Burgundy, but against modern English taste? Yet if I told a Frenchman I like chicken with crisp brown skin served with a bright green salad and a decent baguette, he

would call me unsophisticated.

A lot has changed in the nearly 40 years since I first parked my Citroën up against some vines in a dusty car park. I enjoy clever inventions and beguiling curiosities on what I call the Andouillette Principle: if I cease to order them they will, like chitterlings, disappear and that would be sad. But why have a mini cheese soufflé with the lamb? Why bring uncommanded trays of sweet things? Why put flowers on food? Is it generosity or arrogance?


On the other hand, if I am going to die I would like to die with a glass of Hospices de Beaune Volnay Premier Cru in my hand, having eaten some of Jean-Michel Lorain's snails and feasted on the sight of vines disappearing into the horizon in a golden haze over the sonorously beautiful names of Pommard, Puligny-Montrachet and Clos Vougeot. **CNT**

Getting there

Emirates (emirates.com), Etihad (etihad.com) and Qatar Airways (qatarairways.com) fly direct from the GCC to Paris, from where it's a three-hour drive to Burgundy



A staircase at Abbaye de la Bussière. **Left:** Rose ice cream in a crisp tulip shell at La Côte Saint Jacques



*In nave-like spaces and
on the primped lawn there
are Paul Day sculptures;
I drank an exceptionally
delicious Mâcon-Vergisson
with a stained-glass
window as a backdrop*

The manicured garden at
Abbaye de la Bussière



A woman in Hoi An's Central Food Market.
Opposite: Boats ply the Thu Bon River

PHOTOS: ANDREW ROWAT



THE ROAD

Enchanting ruins, lush landscapes and spicy street food
– *ANTHONY SATTIN* uncovers Vietnam's many charms

TO HANOI



Moules marinières
at The Water Court,
Banyan Tree Lang Co

W

HEELS ARE TURNING IN VIETNAM.

I realised this as soon as I crossed the street in the city formerly known as Saigon and stepped into Givral Café. The logo says it has been here “since 1950”, but that is slightly bending the truth. A landmark café by that name did open in 1950. A meeting ground for the city’s creative set, it stayed open for 60 years but was demolished to make space for a new development, Vincom Center A (part five-star hotel, part shopping mall), in 2010.

This Givral, on level one of the mall, with its white-studded sofas, red-skirted waitresses serving cherry gâteaux, picture windows opening on to the 19th-century Opera House and the Hotel Continental Saigon made famous by playwright Graham Greene’s *The Quiet American* (2002), only returned to this site last year. Today’s Givral is a little brash, quite flashy and serves as a reminder that in Vietnam the wheels of change are turning fast. Welcome to new Saigon, I thought.

I had arrived with an abiding image of a very different wheel, the spinning of an overhead fan in a Saigon hotel room, and of a military helicopter rotor – both of them from the opening sequence of Francis Ford Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now* – that epic Vietnam War film. I was not alone in coming to Vietnam with a head full of such images set against a backdrop of tropical beauty. Don, a 70-year-old Californian I met in the downtown market that first day, had come with the same ideas. But his wife saw things differently and was shopping for just about anything she could lay her hands on.

“Don, do you like this?”

“No, dear.”

“Don, shall I get this?”

“No, dear.”

“Don, you’re not trying. We need to help these people and I’m trying to do that by shopping. Now, how about this?”

“No, dear, I don’t need to try: we don’t need that.”

There was something Don did need. He needed to talk. He was surprised by how Vietnam had changed in the decades since his last visit. It still had all the attractions of old –



Thu Quan restaurant at the Banyan Tree Lang Co

beautiful landscapes, great beaches, historic structures, delicious food – but it now had all the comforts of Thailand, was more accessible than Myanmar and it was home to some of the friendliest people he had ever met. “So warm, so gentle,” he observed.

“Last time I was here, things were a little different. They were shooting at me.” Don had been a combatant in what the Vietnamese call the American War. “The thing is,” and suddenly he was emotional, “they have no rancour. They seem to have moved on.” He scratched his head. “I guess it’s time for me to do the same.” He mentioned that he had been based in Da Nang. “I’m not going back there,” he said. But I was.

More wheels – this time on the overnight *Reunification Express* from Ho Chi Minh City to Da Nang. I love train travel. But this was neither the most glamorous nor the most comfortable ride. It was worth it for the time it gave me to catch up with myself and for the glimpse of the countryside, rice paddies, Chinese-style tombs on the edge of fields, and for the puzzle of gardens lit through the night that turned out to be chrysanthemum plantations.

Da Nang, which we reached in the morning, is the economic heart of central

Vietnam – its largest city, biggest port and now the centre of its tourism industry. A city of nearly a million people and what seems like 10 million motorbikes, it might not be the sort of place you will want to spend much time on holiday. Still, there are reasons to stop and one is the Da Nang Museum of Cham Sculpture (Cham being the people who came from the kingdom of Champa), facing the new Dragon Bridge over the Han River.

The French created the museum in 1919 to house sculptures salvaged from the ruins of Champa, which survived from the 2nd to the 17th century AD. Among the lost Champa cities are Dong Duong, almost completely destroyed by time and war, and My Son, which has done better.

The second reason to stop in Da Nang is the InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort. It is here that Michel Roux Snr has opened his first Asian outpost, La Maison 1888, a smart restaurant with a dining room designed to feel like a *fin de siècle* French mansion. This resort sits on a finger of the Sun Peninsula, where the hills come close to the coast; the resort tumbles down the slope to a pristine curve of beach in a series of black-and-white terraces. ▶



Flowers at The Nam Hai hotel
Right: The Imperial Citadel, Hué



Like its regional rivals Thailand and Myanmar, Vietnam has monuments, beaches, stunning landscapes and excellent hotels. But unlike in those other countries, where you often have to sacrifice comfort (or pay a hefty price) for the sights, the beach or an excellent meal, in Hoi An City, some 30km to the south of Da Nang, these things all come together.

Hoi An's pristine, palm-edged beaches are as good as any in Thailand and home to the sort of sophisticated resorts you would expect to find there. Among them is The Nam Hai – a series of 100 villas built in hoops along the beach, facing the sea – which calls itself Vietnam's "premier luxury resort". It's also an easy drive from here to the ancient ruins at My Son, whose beautiful temples and monuments are on UNESCO's World Heritage List. And Hoi An is also within reach of three of Vietnam's best golf courses, the Colin Montgomerie-designed Montgomerie Links, Greg Norman's Danang Golf Club and Nick Faldo's Laguna Lang Co Golf Club (marketed together as Golf Coast Vietnam). But the main reason to stay in Hoi An is the charm of the city itself.

From the 16th to 19th centuries, Hoi An was one of Southeast Asia's most important ports. When the port silted up, trade moved

elsewhere and much of the 20th century simply passed by. Which, in part, explains why crossing the Thu Bon River by the Japanese Covered Bridge feels like stepping into a lost town of two-storey shop-houses and local markets. They have banned cars from the centre of Hoi An, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. So the only wheels that turn belong to bicycles. When I first went, the feeling of stepping back in time was enhanced by the fact that I had arrived on the night of a Full Moon Lantern Festival (the 14th day of every lunar calendar month), when the town's streetlights are switched off and candles float down the river.

Beyond its architecture, Hoi An is famous for its tailors and chefs. I had brought some tweed from the Isle of Harris and a jacket that I wanted copied. The tailors at Yaly Couture knew exactly what they were doing, and two fittings and two days later, produced a faithful copy, although the new one had the embellishment of a Viet silk lining and cost a fraction of the original. Hoi An's chefs were equally pleasing.

On my first night, I ate at Morning Glory, which prides itself on the authenticity of its Viet food. Run by Trinh Diem Vy, who's

produced a bestseller cookbook and has taught students at New York's venerable Institute of Culinary Education, it serves dishes such as *cau lao* noodles (said to be made with water from a secret Cham-era well) and duck breast with banana flower salad. Ms Vy also runs a cookery school, where you can learn to cook some of the dishes served in her restaurant.

On my last night, I had a very different meal at the Mango Rooms. Tran Thanh Duc, the restaurant's chef-proprietor, was born in the then Saigon, but at the age of 16, he was sent away to what his parents hoped would be a better life. He returned many years later via Malaysia, Texas, Australia and other points East and West, with a love of food, the skill to cook it and the laid-back attitude of a Californian surf dude. "I've been cooking fusion food here for nine years," he said, as I ate his seared tuna with mango sauce. "But now it's time to cook the food I grew up with." Mai Fish, his latest restaurant, which opened a short walk away from Mango Rooms in homage to his mother's kitchen, serves brilliant *cha gio* (fried spring rolls).

I could have happily spent a week in Hoi An, travelling into the countryside to see the sights, lazing on the big beaches and eating. ►



A girl in traditional
school uniform in
Ho Chi Minh City



Local women carrying
baskets on shoulder poles on
The Nam Hai's private beach

A full-page photograph of a beach at sunset. In the foreground, a dark wooden boat sits on the sand. The ocean stretches to the horizon with gentle waves. The sky is filled with soft, golden light from the setting sun, with some clouds visible.

Hoi An's pristine, palm-edged beaches are as good as any in Thailand and home to the sort of sophisticated resorts you would expect to find there. It is also within reach of three of Vietnam's best golf courses

Shopping in Ho
Chi Minh City

The city of Hanoi is in perpetual motion, which seems appropriate for a place that has as its logo a circle enclosing an icon that looks very similar to a steering wheel. Change here is super-charged



A guest room at Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi.
Left: The spa at The Nam Hai, Hoi An

But Hué was just a couple of hours' ride along a train track that passed through what writer Paul Theroux once called the most beautiful scenery he had seen since leaving London (and by then he had crossed Europe, the Middle East, India, Thailand and Malaysia). The twisting waterside track was still beautiful when I went, especially when the jungle closed in on us. But I remember more the fun on the train when a group of businessmen hung up their jackets, poured out rice grape and started dealing cards.

Like Hoi An, Hué has plenty of atmosphere, but while Hoi An's was that of a trading town, Hué is all faded grandeur. Until 1945, the Forbidden Purple City and its surrounding citadels, built on the banks of Perfume River, were home to emperors, their retinue and the imperial administration. Like Hoi An, it gives the impression of having changed little over the centuries, and arriving by cyclo helped that illusion. But inside its 10km of surrounding wall, the great red-and-gold palace chambers, with their tiled roofs and intricate carvings of dragons, phoenix, unicorns and turtles – the four protective spirits – have either been much restored or entirely rebuilt.

The illusion continued that evening when I dined on Franco-Viet fare beneath the

wheeling fans at Les Jardins de la Carambole, where the imperial red cloths and shuttered windows could have been relics from French-ruled Indo-China, although the place is a creation by a Frenchman. The illusion was no less complete the next day at Tha Om Garden House, the ancient-style but modern-build home of Pham Ba Vinh and his wife Ton Nu Cam Tu. Mr Pham is descended from an old Mandarin family and the feast he served in his beautiful house, which included lantern-shaped spring rolls and grilled beef dished up on a tile, was imperial both in style and scale.

If there's any doubt as to how far the wheel has turned in Hué, there is none at all in the capital, Hanoi. The city is in perpetual motion, which seems appropriate for a place that has as its logo a circle enclosing an icon that looks very similar to a steering wheel. Change here is super-charged. Ironically, then, this was also where I walked the most. I spent several days on foot in Hanoi's endlessly restless Old Quarter. I trawled some of the shops in the area around St Joseph's Cathedral and grazed at a number of food stalls. (I avoided Pho Nghi Tam, the alley of dog-meat stalls, and ate well on Hang Ga and Cau Go streets.)

I walked around the West Lake at the heart of the city, around the embalmed corpse of Ho

Chi Minh, the man credited with creating the nation as it exists today. I strolled through the brilliant displays of the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology (a glimpse of a different life in the mountains) and the trophies of battle at the Military History Museum. Then I ended up in the Metropole, the old colonial hotel where Charlie Chaplin stayed on his honeymoon, Graham Greene wrote and Joan Baez sang through an American air raid. Now remodelled and renamed Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi, it is the city's most prestigious hotel and also the best place to muse on the pace and scale of the change that is sweeping through the city and the country.

The Metropole's Le Beaulieu restaurant is part of the original hotel and probably the city's oldest surviving restaurant. Breakfast there is a sumptuous affair, made more so by a seemingly endless line of couples just beyond the street-side bar, La Terrasse. Driving up on motorbikes and in taxis, wearing hired suits and gowns, they choose to have their wedding photographs taken, not in front of Uncle Ho's mausoleum or the 11th-century Temple of Literature, dedicated to Confucius, but instead with the Metropole – that icon of a more glamorous age – as a background. Hanoi, like much of Vietnam, is changing fast, but some things stay the same. *Plus ça change...*

NEED TO KNOW: VIETNAM

Suggested 10-day itinerary

HO CHI MINH CITY

Spend two days in this city, formerly known as Saigon.

WHERE TO STAY

Park Hyatt Saigon

This hotel is within walking distance of the Opera House. *Doubles from AED 985; 0084-83-824 1234, saigon.park.hyatt.com*

Hotel Continental Saigon

This 80-room, 1880-built property has featured in Hollywood films. *Doubles from AED 280; 0084-83-829 9201, continentalsaigon.com*

WHERE TO EAT

Givral Café

It serves delicious coffee and baked goods.

Coffee from AED 10; 0084-85-412 1211, givralcafe.vn

Saigon Saigon Bar

Perfect for sundowners, it offers panoramic city views. *Drinks from AED 40; 0084-90-690 0523, caravellehotel.com*

Serenata Café

A popular local hangout serving great Vietnamese coffee. *Coffee from AED 10; 0084-83-997 7178*

WHAT TO DO

War Remnants Museum

It chronicles the French and American wars in Vietnam. *0084-83-930 5587, warremnantsmuseum.com*

Ben Thanh Market

Visit the city's largest market for local produce.

DA NANG

Take the 75-minute flight or overnight *Reunification Express* train to Da Nang. Spend two days here.

WHERE TO STAY

InterContinental Danang

Sun Peninsula Resort

This resort offers special packages for golfers at Montgomerie Links and the Danang Golf Club. *Doubles from AED 1,875; 0084-511-393 8888, danang.intercontinental.com*

Hyatt Regency Danang Resort and Spa

This 200-room luxury resort is located on Vietnam's central coast. *Doubles from AED 775; 0084-511-398 1234, danang.regency.hyatt.com*

Banyan Tree Lang Co

North of Da Nang, this resort has

an 18-hole golf course designed by Sir Nick Faldo.

Doubles from AED 1,570; 0084-54-369 5888, banyantree.com

WHERE TO EAT

La Maison 1888

Chef Michel Roux's restaurant serves French dishes infused with Asian flavours.

Entrées from AED 150; 0084-511-393 8888, danang.intercontinental.com

WHAT TO DO

Da Nang Museum of Cham Sculpture

Opened in 1919, it has a large collection of relics from the Champa kingdom.

0084-511-357 4801, chammuseum.danang.vn

My Son

This UNESCO World Heritage Site is a cluster of ancient Hindu temples, 60km south-west of Da Nang.

HOI AN CITY

Book a local taxi for the 30km drive from Da Nang. Spend two days here.

WHERE TO STAY

The Nam Hai

This villa resort sits on the pristine sands of the east Vietnam coast. *Doubles from AED 1,990; 0084-510-394 0000, ghmhotels.com*

Anantara Hoi An Resort

The 93-room resort is built in French colonial style. *Doubles from AED 485; 0084-510-391 4555, hoi-an.anantara.com*

WHERE TO EAT

Morning Glory

It's known for its authentic local dishes.

Entrées from AED 35; 0084-510-224 1555

Mango Rooms

Asian fusion dining at its best. *Entrées from AED 40; 0084-510-391 0839, mangorooms.com*

Mai Fish

Find home-style food here. *Entrées from AED 45; 0084-510-392 5545*

WHAT TO DO

Hoi An Museum of History & Culture

It records centuries of rule by Cham and other Vietnamese dynasties.



Yaly Couture

Go here to get a dress copied or a shirt tailored in authentic Viet silk. *0084-510-391 4995*

HUÉ

Take the three-hour bus ride from Hoi An. Spend two days here.

WHERE TO STAY

La Résidence Hué Hôtel & Spa

This 122-room hotel features Art Deco architecture. *Doubles from AED 455; 0084-54-383 7475, la-residence-hue.com*

WHERE TO EAT

Les Jardins de la Carambole

It offers both Vietnamese and French cooking in an Indo-China setting. *Entrées from AED 25; 0084-54-354 8815, lesjardinsdelacarambole.com*

Tha Om Garden House

Run by a former mandarin's family, this is where you go for a special meal. *0084-54-352 7810*

WHAT TO DO

The Imperial Citadel

This UNESCO World Heritage Site has pagodas, fortresses and palaces.

HANOI

Spend your last two days in Vietnam's capital. Make the 14-hour train ride or hour-long flight here from Hué.

WHERE TO STAY

Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi

This iconic hotel has hosted many celebrity guests such as

Charlie Chaplin and Brad Pitt.

Doubles from AED 865; 0084-43-826 6919, sofitel-legend.com

Hilton Hanoi Opera Hotel

This French Quarter hotel overlooks the Opera House. *Doubles from AED 370; 0084-43-933 0500, hilton.com*

WHERE TO EAT

Bobby Chinn

The home and restaurant of the celebrity chef is the place to dine. *Entrées from AED 35; 0084-43-719 2460, bobbychinn.com*

Street food

Enjoy local food on Hang Ga and Cau Go streets.

WHAT TO DO

Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum

View the embalmed body of the founder of modern Vietnam.

Museums

Visit the **Vietnam Museum of Ethnology** (vme.org.vn) and the **Vietnam Military History Museum** (btlsgsn.org.vn) to learn more about the country.

Temple of Literature

This former Confucian temple is now a public park. **CNT**

Getting there

Emirates (emirates.com), Etihad (etihad.com) and Qatar Airways (qatarairways.com) fly direct to Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam Airlines (vietnamairlines.com) and Vietnam Railways (vietnam-railway.com) provide connections to cities like Hanoi, Hué and Da Nang.

Morning Glory and grilled
pork in Ho Chi Minh City



Get the look

Pack right for this month's destinations



STELLA MCCARTNEY A/W '15



GUCCI A/W '15



VIETNAM

A relaxed look with subtle touches of the Orient – ethnic earrings, perhaps – will take you from the beaches of Hoi An to the streets of Hanoi



1 Earrings, AED 2,200, **Lanvin** 2 Dress, AED 6,136, **Adam Lippes** at net-a-porter.com 3 Clutch, AED 3,200, **Charlotte Olympia** at Harvey Nichols Dubai 4 iPhone 6 case, AED 200, **Diane von Furstenberg** 5 Culottes, AED 2,073, **Paper London** at Valleydeez 6 Chloé Eau de Toilette, AED 360 7 Sandals, AED 2,450, **Tory Burch**

1 Shirt, AED 1,145, **Balenciaga** 2 Sunglasses, AED 941, **L.G.R** at Private Collection 3 Trousers, AED 1,375, **Maison Margiela** at mrporter.com 4 Wallet, AED 1,500, **Dior Homme** 5 Watch, AED 5,100, **Salvatore Ferragamo** 6 Bag, AED 5,515, **Dsquared2** 7 Loafers, AED 3,490, **Christian Louboutin**



TORY BURCH PRE-FALL '15

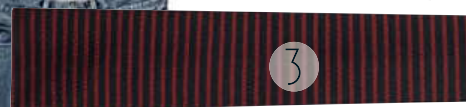


BOTTEGA VENETA A/W '15



AUSTIN

Add a modern twist to Texan classics like ankle boots, cowgirl hats and blue jeans and you'll fit right in with South Congress' hip set





WORDS: MARTA SAHELICES; PHOTO: CORBIS

Where are you?

Looking at this image may prove a challenge for anyone with vertigo, an affliction that the man perched on the precipice clearly doesn't suffer from. This view captures a beautiful, rugged region in the south-east of a country with quite a low population density (three people per sqkm). More specifically, this spot is in a national park – a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2000 – the name of which makes no reference to the intense ochre tones seen here but rather to the mist produced by droplets of oil from the predominant tree (from the Myrtaceae family). Located around 200km to the north of the capital city, this protected region receives over three million visitors annually and is home to unique wonders, both natural and man-made, among which, according to Guinness World Records, is the steepest railway line on the planet, descending at an angle of 52 degrees. Nearby, a unique Christmas-style festival takes place from June to August, started in 1994 and born out of nostalgia among a group of colonists who longed for their home country at this time of year. Where are you?

PRIZE

Email your answer identifying the national park and country where this photograph was taken to contest@appgulf.com and you could win a three-night stay for two at The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi in the Maldives. See overleaf for details and look out for the answer in the November issue.

CONTEST

WIN A THREE-NIGHT STAY FOR TWO AT THE SUN SIYAM IRU FUSHI, MALDIVES

Situated at the heart of the Noonu Atoll, The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi offers a classic Maldivian getaway, on a 52-acre island surrounded by the turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean, and just a 45-minute scenic seaplane ride from the capital, Malé.

The 221 spacious beach villas, overwater villas and hidden retreats come with wooden furniture as well as indoor and al fresco bathing areas including a signature spa tub. Deluxe Beach Villas feature a sandy thatched *sala* where you can enjoy a refreshing cocktail or private dining experience, and some come with a private pool.

Each of the 11 restaurants uses locally sourced, organic produce, while the fresh fish and seafood is caught daily by native fishermen. The diverse fare on offer ranges from English breakfasts at Iru Restaurant and French classics at overwater Flavours to Maldivian seafood at Islander's Grill. Healthy cuisine is served at The Spa Café, which you can enjoy while unwinding after a massage or treatment at The Spa by Thalgo – an Eastern-Western fusion centre, where locally grown products are used in the therapies.

Drop your kids off at the Koamas Kidz Paradise playing area, while you join a yoga or meditation session, take a dip in the infinity pool or spend the afternoon enjoying a racquet sport or one of the many marine activities offered by the Dive Centre.

To win a three-night stay for two in a Deluxe Beach Villa With Pool on a half-board basis and including a spa treatment for two, correctly identify the location of this issue's **Where are you?** competition before September 30, 2015.

Reservations are subject to availability. The prize is valid through September 30, 2016, is non-transferrable, cannot be redeemed for cash and does not include public holidays. Transfers, minibar and all other expenses not stated in this prize are subject to payment either on consumption or departure. For more information call 00960-656 0591 or visit thesunsiyam.com



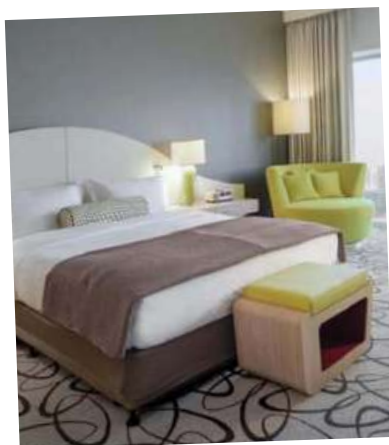
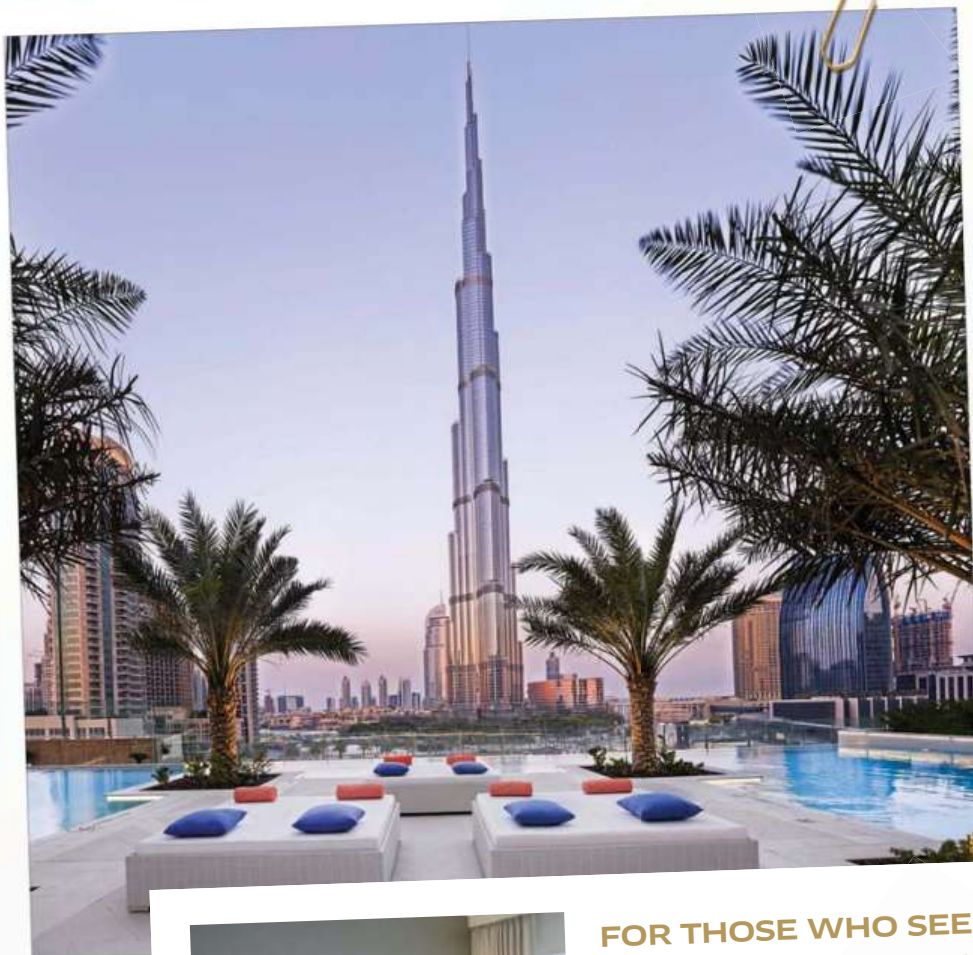
From top: The spacious Deluxe Beach Villa With Pool; the villa's pool has views of the Indian Ocean and the island's white sand beach

WINNER: JULY 2015

The winner of July's Where are you? contest is Colin Webb of Dubai who correctly identified the location of the photo as **Dobongsan Mountain, Seoul**. He won a three-night stay for two at Rome Cavalieri, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts



COMPETITION RULES 1. Entries for *Condé Nast Traveller's* Where are you? competition should be sent via email to: contest@appgulf.com **2.** Winners will be judged at the discretion of *Condé Nast Traveller*. The decision of the judges will be final and binding. No correspondence will be entertained. Only one correct answer will be registered per entrant per issue. **3.** Each entry must arrive no later than September 30, 2015. Winners will be contacted by email or telephone whenever possible. **4.** The entries must be in English and complete in all respects. **5.** *Condé Nast Traveller* is not responsible for late entries. Illegible or mechanically produced entries are not eligible. Entries by text message are not eligible. **6.** Prizes will not be transferred or exchanged for cash or any other item. No refunds or credits for changes or cancellations are allowed. All other expenses and costs, which are not specified as being included in the prize, are the sole responsibility of the winner. **7.** All prizes must be redeemed prior to the expiry date. **8.** Taxes, if any, are the sole responsibility of the winner. **9.** The Where are you? competition is open to readers of *Condé Nast Traveller* aged 18 and over on the date of entry and who are ordinarily residents of the GCC. **10.** Employees of *Condé Nast Traveller* (Arab Publishing Partners), ITP, participating promotional agencies, contributors to *Condé Nast Traveller*, and the families of any of those above are not eligible to contest. **11.** All entries to the Where are you? competition become the sole property of *Condé Nast Traveller* and will not be acknowledged nor returned. **12.** Entries become the property of *Condé Nast Traveller* and may be used for such purpose and in such media as the company deems fit, without requiring the participant's prior permission. **13.** Acceptance of the prize constitutes consent for the use of the winner's name and likeness and those of his/her travelling companion for editorial, advertising and publicity purposes. **14.** *Condé Nast Traveller* will not be liable for any loss, damage or expense incurred by a prize winner or by his/her travelling companion (for example, costs of repatriation) as a consequence of any party participating in providing the prize becoming insolvent or entering into liquidation or bankruptcy. **15.** *Condé Nast Traveller* reserves the right to amend any or all of the terms of this contest, or the prizes on offer, at any time without prior notice. **16.** Contestants, by entering the competition, agree to be bound by the above rules, terms and conditions.



FOR THOSE WHO SEEK A STRONG POINT OF VIEW

Step out of the conventional as you step in to Sofitel Dubai Down Town. Enjoy refreshing new perspectives and French Art de Vivre as you treat yourself to an indulgent stay, innovative cuisine and rejuvenating spa experiences. Situated in the heart of Downtown Dubai, the hotel is directly connected to The Dubai Mall, offers proximity to the metro station and overlooks the impressive Burj Khalifa.

SOFITEL DUBAI DOWNTOWN: +971 4 503 6666, WWW.SOFITEL-DUBAI-DOWNTOWN.COM

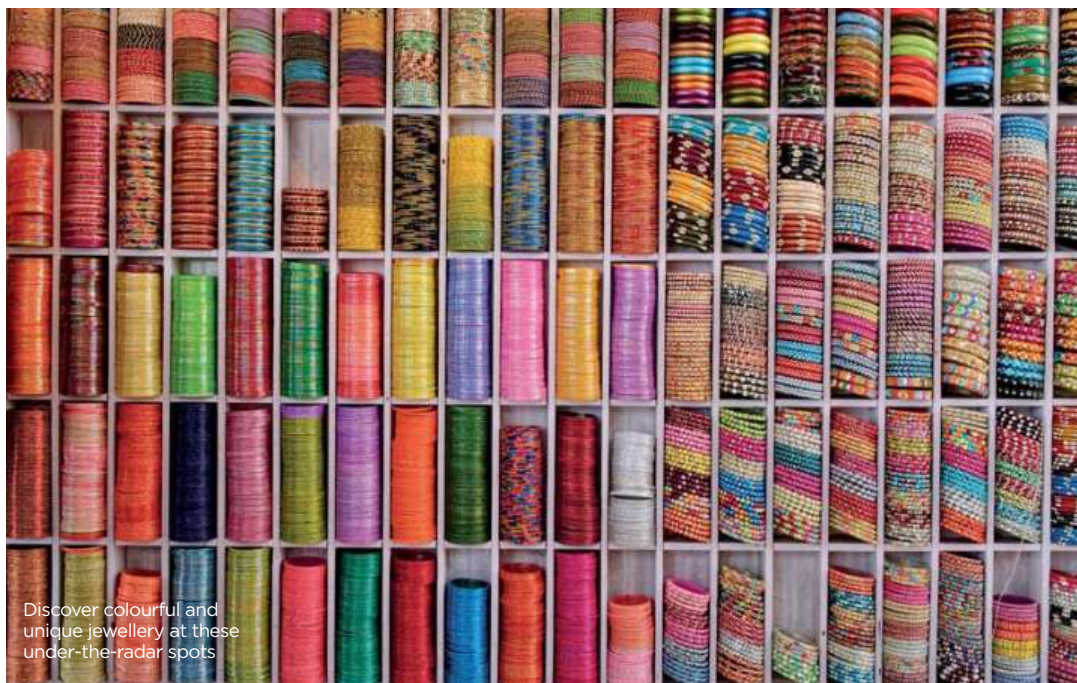
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WWW.SOFITEL.COM   



The experts

Travel wisdom from those in the know



Discover colourful and unique jewellery at these under-the-radar spots

Where's the best place to find one-of-a-kind jewellery?



MEHER MIRCHANDANI

CEO at Meher and Riddhima, Dubai

"I've been to many markets across the world, from Istanbul and Paris to London and California, but the **Rajasthali emporium**, which I discovered a few years ago in Jaipur, India, still stands out as one of the most exciting and eclectic I've seen. Situated opposite the Ajmeri Gate, this market is a treasure chest of beautiful jewellery, handicrafts and textiles. I found gorgeous enamel work, Rajasthani beads and embroidery pieces that influenced some of the details in our designs. Our Hollywood Princess collection a couple of years ago was embellished with enamel painted silver beads that we found there. The market was created by the government to support local artisans and allows villagers to showcase their intricate and colourful work. I've found many original pieces of jewellery and they are just beautiful."



USHI SATO

Author of theshadesandscarf.com, Dubai

"In a city known for its luxury brands, Paris still has many hidden corners, back streets and courtyards to explore with great vintage jewellery to be found. **Village Saint-Paul**, a pretty, enclosed pedestrianised area in the heart of the city, is a labyrinth in the Marais located in the 4th *arrondissement*, known for its medieval and pre-revolutionary buildings and historical streets that are still intact. The jewels you'll find here are rare, aged and beautiful, and have stood the test of time. To discover this secret shopping spot, head to 3 Rue Charlemagne where you'll see a lone chair with vintage boxes on it – this marks a hidden entrance to the village, where you'll find all sorts of treasures including antique jewellery, for which you can bargain. Finding the best pieces requires weaving through courtyards and passageways, but it's definitely worth it."



MIRI KHAYAT

*Stylist at s*uce, Dubai*

"The **Bourj Hammoud jewellery district** in Lebanon is where Beirut's finest independent jewellers live and work. It's the heart of the Armenian community, who are known for being at the forefront of the fine jewellery and precious gems business. Each shop specialises in a specific type of traditional craftsmanship, like the intricate hand-weaving of solid gold or various techniques of diamond setting, often passed down from generation to generation. You'll find the old mixed in with the new, and it's also a great place to get your own designs produced and customised. I found one of my favourite pieces of jewellery in this neighbourhood – a handmade clay, diamond and gold butterfly ring. The unity of the materials is so wonderfully put together that the piece becomes a work of art."

SEAMLESS TRAVEL

Getting from one place to another never felt so smooth



Left: A den area with a pool table at the Virgin Atlantic Clubhouse at Heathrow Airport. **Below:** Contemporary purple lighting on a night flight to Dubai

If there's one thing that can cramp your travel style, it's the endless waiting in lines, at check-in, or at security as the person in front of you unpacks their half-dozen electronic devices that have to be separated into bins. Which is why we were gleeful about the Virgin Atlantic Upper Class Wing at London Heathrow Terminal 3. A quick call to the dedicated helpline ahead of arriving and we were ushered through to a private car port where a Virgin representative was on hand to receive us as we exited the vehicle; the baggage handlers already had the tags at the ready, fastening them on as they lifted the suitcases out of the boot. Our next glimpse of our luggage was on the carousel in Dubai. A quick check of the passport and we were handed pre-printed boarding passes and ushered to an exclusive security check, just for Upper Class passengers. We were through and in the Clubhouse sipping bubbles within 10 minutes of having stepped out of the car.

The Clubhouse is a sprawling 15,000sqft space with several distinct areas: a library with a wall of bookshelves and separate work stations; a den with a red-topped pool table beyond which is a wall of TV screens that, when we stopped by, had several avid fans gathered around for a football game; a children's play area; and most happily, a spa and salon where you could while away the time with a foot massage, a facial or even a haircut. Sit down anywhere and someone will come by to see whether you'd like a cocktail or perhaps a plate of tapas or some hot, made-to-order food. Before a night flight, this is a tempting offer. The

Upper Class passengers can enjoy afternoon tea in the air



charcuterie, cheese and salad selection at The Deli makes for a tasty, lighter meal.

On board, it's tempting to continue the festivities at the bar at the back of the Upper Class cabin, where you can do a grape tasting or strike up a conversation with an interesting fellow passenger. Though we were equally happy ensconced in the large leather armchair that serves as a seat in the Upper Class Suites. With aisle access for all passengers, the seats don't recline into a bed but rather, with a push of a button, the back flips over to create a flat bed of 79.5in. Topped with the mattress and nestled under the large duvet, it's a cosy set-up. The 10.4in entertainment screens come with 300 hours of on-demand video (plus audio and games, of course), more than enough choice on a seven-hour journey. Meals span a range of cuisines – a Malaysian curry was particularly enjoyable – though the highlight has to be the afternoon tea service. Scones and clotted cream at 35,000 feet? Sign us right up.

virgin-atlantic.com



The stylish Clubhouse airport lounge. **Below:** Virgin Atlantic flies daily between Dubai and London





Yas Mall is a family destination

Shop in STYLE

Pick up the latest runway trends at
Abu Dhabi's fashion destination, Yas Mall

Yas Mall, the UAE capital's leading fashion destination, invites trendsetters from around the region to celebrate the first annual Fashion Week event from September 23-27, introducing a unique lifestyle experience for all the family. Some of the mall's most exclusive international brands will be participating in the five-day fashion show to launch their autumn/winter '15 collections, showcasing the most stylish looks this season.

Participating brands, Debenhams, House of Fraser, Weill, Laurel, Sonia Rykiel, Stradivarius, Gerard Darel, Morgan de Toi and Hoss will be unveiling the latest runway looks, providing insights into cropped flares as the new culottes, silk scarves the new accessory and backpacks the new handbags.

Fashion followers will also enjoy three exciting fashion shows by the largest Debenhams store outside of the UK, showcasing

key glamorous pieces by their own designers from the 2015 autumn/winter collection. House of Fraser, the two-floor department store, where 50 per cent of the brands are exclusive to them, is also participating.

This autumn marks Yas Mall's one-year anniversary and also the opening of TRYANO, the much talked about 200,000sqft concept store from Chalhoub Group, the first of its kind in the Middle East, which will aim to make shopping a complete sensory experience with an imaginative and entertaining retail space.

Whatever your style, Yas Mall's Fashion Week will have covetable fashion to make sure you look runway ready for the cooler climate, with accessories to make your outfit pop.

For more information call 00971-800-927 6255 or visit yasmall.ae

Shop the latest trends
at Yas Mall, Abu Dhabi



A contemporary look
by Henry Holland.
Right: House of Fraser
is among the brands
participating in the
Fashion Week event



Stockists

FASHION

3.1 Phillip Lim at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

Adam Lippes at Net-A-Porter.com: net-a-porter.com

Alice + Olivia Dubai, 00971-4-325-3554; Kuwait City, 00965-2-259 7861

Alexander McQueen Dubai, 00971-4-339 8760; Doha, 00974-4-495 3876; Kuwait City, 00965-2-575 7739

Balenciaga Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-676 7370; Dubai, 00971-4-395 1769; Doha, 00974-6-682 5225; Kuwait City, 00965-2-574 1449; Jeddah, 00966-12-261 1601; Riyadh, 00966-11-462 0738

Berluti Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-643 2068; Dubai, 00971-4-501 6965; Doha, 00974-4-416 1860

Bottega Veneta Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-676 6707; Dubai, 00971-4-325 3981; Doha, 00974-4-450 7354; Manama, 00973-1-332 0000; Kuwait City, 00965-2-530 9666; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 2341

Canali at Bloomingdale's: Dubai, 00971-4-350 5333

Chanel Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 1030; Dubai, 00971-4-382 7100; Kuwait City, 00965-2-245 9290; Jeddah, 00966-12-667 8436; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 2710

Charlotte Olympia at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh 00966-11-273 4444

CH Carolina Herrera Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-412 4050; Dubai, 00971-4-339 8132; Doha, 00974-4-413 4748; Manama, 00973-1-711 2721; Kuwait City, 00965-2-259 7785; Jeddah, 00966-12-641 0433; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 0780

Christian Louboutin Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-412 4030; Dubai, 00971-4-325 3935; Doha 00974-4-450 7004; Manama 00973-1-717 8076; Kuwait City 00965-2-297 9011; Jeddah 00966-12-261 0304; Riyadh 00966-11-211 2819

Coach Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3997; Dubai, 00971-4-339 8670; Manama, 00973-1-758 1798; Kuwait City, 00965-2-530 9535; Jeddah, 00966-12-215 0669; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 2300

Dior Dubai, 00971-4-330 8739; Kuwait City, 00965-2-220 0711

Dolce & Gabbana at Net-a-Porter: net-a-porter.com

Dsquared2 Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-412 4020; Dubai, 00971-4-339 8709

dunhill Dubai, 00971-4-434 0403; Doha, 00974-4-442 9900; Manama, 00973-1-758

1999; Kuwait City, 00965-2-249 8611; Riyadh, 00966-11-810 2632

Fendi Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3553; Dubai, 00971-4-339 9782; Doha, 00974-4-460 0945; Manama, 00973-1-332 0505; Jeddah, 00966-12-284 2803; Riyadh, 00966-11-462 6098

Givenchy Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-674 2800; Dubai, 00971-4-330 8282; Doha, 00974-4-448 5555; Manama, 00973-1-717 8502; Kuwait City, 00965-2-530 9648

Gucci Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 6844; Dubai, 00971-4-339 8953; Doha, 00974-4-421 7824; Kuwait City, 00965-2-530 9997; Jeddah, 00966-12-668 7034; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 2627

H&M Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-695 8101; Dubai, 00971-4-419 0346; Doha, 00974-4-486 4144; Manama, 00973-1-717 9885; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3057; Riyadh, 00966-11-510 1404; Jeddah, 00966-12-215 1551

Hermès Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-575 9556; Dubai, 00971-4-351 1190; Doha, 00974-6-601 1882; Manama, 00973-1-753 5519; Kuwait City, 00965-2-227 0215

Isabel Marant at Boutique 1: Dubai, 00971-4-395 1300

L.G.R at Private Collection: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-447 1267; Dubai, 00971-4-357 3573; Doha, 00974-4-002 0999

Loewe Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-412 4015; Dubai, 00971-4-325 3754

Louis Vuitton Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 2166; Dubai, 00971-4-330 8060; Doha, 00974-4-413 4931; Manama, 00973-1-753 7543; Kuwait City, 00965-2-220 0522; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 2705

Maison Margiela at Mr Porter: mrporter.com

Matthew Williamson at Boutique 1: Dubai, 00971-4-425 7888

Michael Kors Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-412 4070; Dubai, 00971-4-395 1694; Manama, 00973-1-711 2724; Kuwait City, 00965-2-259 7805; Jeddah, 00966-12-275 3887; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4911

Missoni at Boutique 1: Dubai, 00971-4-425 7888

Miu Miu at Net-a-Porter: net-a-porter.com

Paper London at Valleydez: Dubai, 00971-4-321 2898; s*uce Dubai, 00971-4-344 7270

Paul Smith Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-412 4000; Dubai, 00971-4-395 1410; Doha, 00974-4-407 7153; Manama, 00973-1-717 9564; Kuwait City, 00965-2-259 7801; Jeddah, 00966-12-275 4632

Proenza Schouler at Net-a-Porter: net-a-porter.com

Saint Laurent by Hedi Slimane Abu Dhabi,

00971-2-6432609; Doha, 00974-4-037 0639; Kuwait City, 00965-2-227 0255

Sensi Studio at Net-a-Porter: net-a-porter.com

Temperley London at Symphony: bysymphony.com

Tod's Dubai, 00971-4-341 3033; Doha, 00974-4-413 4937; Manama, 00973-1-713 1090; Jeddah, 00966-1-2284 2862; Riyadh, 00966-1-1293 9440

Tory Burch Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-616 6999; Dubai, 00971-4-325 3670; Doha, 00974-5-016 8174; Manama, 00973-1-711 2718; Kuwait City, 00965-2-220 0594; Jeddah, 00966-12-641 0455

Versace Dubai, 00971-4-339 8285; Doha, 00974-4-447 7333; Manama, 00973-1-753 6663; Riyadh, 00966-11-419 6096

BEAUTY

Benefit at Sephora: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-445 3690; Dubai, 00971-4-339 9828; Doha, 00974-4-450 7345; Manama, 00973-1-717 9521; Kuwait City, 00965-2-259 7769; Jeddah, 00966-12-215 0496; Riyadh, 00966-11-207 8075

Chanel at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

Chloé at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh 00966-11-273 4444

Clarins at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

Clinique at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

Estée Lauder at Paris Gallery: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 6662; Dubai, 00971-4-330 8289; Manama, 00973-1-717 8581

Flutterfluff at Sophie's Closet: sophiescloset.com

Guerlain at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

Kiehl's Dubai, 00971-4-330 8843

Kinara at Olga Lorencin: olgalorencinskincare.com

Laura Mercier at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh 00966-11-273 4444

Nuxe at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

Revlon at Boots: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-492 6597; Dubai, 00971-4-419 0301; Doha, 00974-4-411 8784; Manama, 00973-1-717

WHERE TO BUY

The storefront of French luggage-maker Moynat on Mount Street, London

00971-4-434 0434; Doha, 00974-4-450 7798; Kuwait City, 00965-2-530 9656; Jeddah, 00966-12-660 0720

Chopard Dubai, 00971-4-339 8333; Manama, 00973-1-758 0667; Doha, 00974-4-830 100; Kuwait City, 00965-2-220 0772; Riyadh, 00966-11-293 4555

Ciner at Sophie's Closet: sophiescloset.com
Graff Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-674 3666; Dubai, 00971-4-339 9795

JEANRICHARD at Rivoli: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3035; Dubai, 00971-4-341 3121; Muscat, 00968-2-455 8290; Doha, 00974-4-479 0107

Harry Winston at Rivoli: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3035; Dubai, 00971-4-341 3121; Muscat, 00968-2-455 8290; Doha, 00974-4-479 0107

Laco shop.laco.de

Lanvin Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-677 1180; Dubai, 00971-4-330 8008; Doha, 00974-4-413 4765; Jeddah, 00966-12-661 2812; Riyadh, 00966-11-288 5455

Longines at Rivoli: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3035; Dubai, 00971-4-434 2542; Muscat, 00968-2-455 8290; Doha, 00974-4-479 0107

Oris at Rivoli: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3035; Dubai, 00971-4-341 3121; Muscat, 00968-2-455 8290; Doha, 00974-4-483 3679; Kuwait City, 00965-2-530 9629

Patek Philippe at Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons: Dubai, 00971-4-355 9090

Salvatore Ferragamo Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-665 5481; Dubai, 00971-4-341 1022; Manama, 00973-1-717 8535; Kuwait City, 00965-2-530 9677; Jeddah, 00966-12-215 0883; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 1050

Tiffany & Co. Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 4477; Dubai, 00971-4-341 0655; Doha, 00974-4-413 4976; Manama, 00973-1-753 1616; Kuwait City, 00965-2-246 0320; Jeddah, 00966-12-275 4701; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 2444

Tudor at Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons: Dubai, 00971-4-355 9090

MISCELLANEOUS

Diane von Furstenberg Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-676 7071; Dubai, 00971-4-395 1600; Kuwait City, 00965-2-227 0271; Riyadh, 00966-11-211 2360

Rimowa at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

William & Son williamandson.com



9852; Kuwait City, 00965-2-495 4609; Jeddah, 00966-12-655 3972

Sisley sisley-paris.com

Tom Ford at Harvey Nichols: Dubai, 00971-4-409 8888; Kuwait City, 00965-2-228 3008; Riyadh, 00966-11-273 4444

WATCHES & JEWELLERY

Bell & Ross Dubai, 00971-4-359 4115

Blancpain at Rivoli: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3035; Dubai, 00971-4-341 3121; Muscat, 00968-2-455 8290; Doha, 00974-4-479 0107

Breitling Dubai, 00971-4-341 1165; Muscat,

00968-24-66 5394; Doha, 00974-4-407 7148; Manama, 00973-1-717 1800; Kuwait City, 00965-2-227 0290; Riyadh, 00966-11-462 8833

Bulgari Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 8828; Dubai, 00971-4-330 8834; Doha, 00974-4-413 4568; Kuwait City, 00965-2-299 6498; Jeddah, 00966-12-669 7229; Riyadh, 00966-11-460 2800

Carl F. Bucherer at Rivoli: Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-681 3035; Dubai, 00971-4-341 3121; Muscat, 00968-2-455 8290; Doha, 00974-4-479 0107

Cartier Abu Dhabi, 00971-2-491 9716; Dubai,

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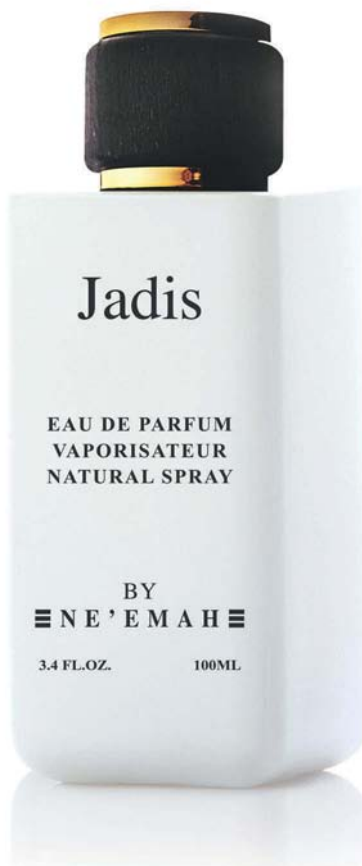
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The Practice of Perfect Hospitality

MOST WANTED

A look at what caught our eye this month, from unique retreats to exotic scents



Oriental scents

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Available exclusively at Sephora Middle East; neemah.com



THE REAL DEAL

From remote African safari lodges to boutique river cruises across Asia, Sanctuary Retreats offers carefully curated itineraries and works closely with local communities, highlighting its commitment to conservation and responsible tourism. Get back to nature at private properties in South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya's Masai Mara, the gorilla-filled mountains of Uganda and the green wilderness of Botswana and Zambia. If a floating hotel is more your thing, explore the Nile in Egypt, the Ayeyarwady in Myanmar and the Yangtze in China with expert guides and a limited number of guests ensuring an intimate trip. sanctuaryretreats.com

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Room with a view

USA THE ST. REGIS NEW YORK

The living room looks out over Central Park, which stretches across 843 acres of Upper Manhattan

DIOR SUITE

When Marlene Dietrich and Salvador Dali were considering a place to call home in Manhattan, they chose The St. Regis New York. Just metres away from Fifth Avenue, the hotel, emblematic of the Beaux-Arts architectural style, has 256 rooms, nearly a third of which are plush suites. This suite, measuring over 200sqm, is an homage to the French luxury fashion brand. In line with the Dior aesthetic, the décor reflects a traditional palette of soft muted tones: subtle greys, mauves and whites that blend harmoniously with the elegant furniture and statement pieces. Sumptuous upholstery and curtains,

leather trimmings and the latest in technology may keep you indoors, but venture out to the remodelled King Cole Bar & Salon – the concept and menu for which was designed by chef John DeLucie, whose contemporary style perfectly complements the culinary heritage of one of the city's most storied spots.

Doubles from AED 3,285; Dior Suite from AED 38,570 including butler service and breakfast; 001-212-753 4500, stregisnewyork.com



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